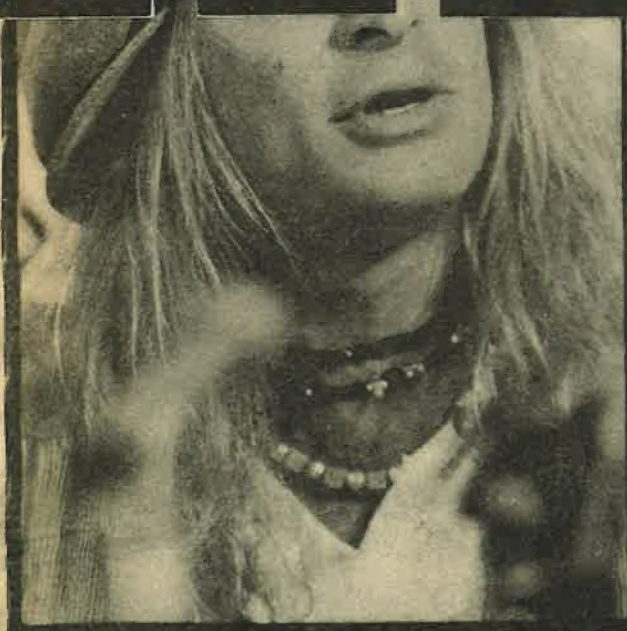


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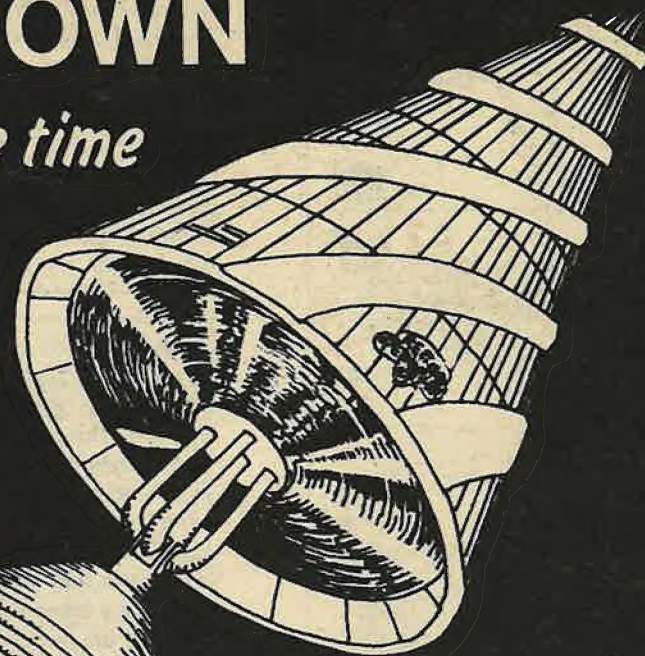
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# The EYEOPENER

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# FARM U PDATE

Local Club LEE's PALACE turns its new upstairs venue into a dance club starting this month, with Nerve's own SCOTT WOODS spinning 'molten slabs of crucial plastic' on Tuesday nights under the handle 'Cold Blood Mash Master King Butt Face Jr.' The Masher is currently trying to finance a rap song using the highlights of Kiss: *Alive*, which he claims will "out-rock" Run-DMC's recent hit 'Walk This Way'.

What Toronto punk rock promoter buys crates of 'Stork' brand diapers? Gary Topp of the Gary's buys these things, as his latest confirmation is the birth of Alexandra Topp (also known as Princess Tiny Meat). Gary claims he couldn't have done it without his wife, Heather. (A likely story). Gary is currently turning baby Tiny Meat onto the new Residents album, and will now be promoting children's entertainment, starting with the recent DR. & THE MEDICS show.

Life's a bitch, and that's only the best parts. This is why there's a constant demand for protest music. This is the theory behind 'The Three Faces Of Protest,' a live show at the Hotel Isabella, Sun. December 7th, featuring SEBASTIAN (new cassette *This Is A Protest Album* out now); JOE HALL (new album out January); and ex-Kensington Market leader KEITH McKIE.

Lead singer of 'psychedelic' band THE CULT, IAN ASTBURY was pelted with olives when he attempted to lend his larynx to an encore performance by 'psychedelic' band CHESTERFIELD KINGS at a recent Toronto show. The Kings also had to endure the muted warblings of ex-rock star WAYNE KRAMER, and top rock journalist MICK FARREN. Memories are no doubt made of this.

What Nerve writer fell through the ceiling of a hip local club while trying to exorcise the venue of demons during a show by hot Vancouver act S---Y P---Y? Wasn't me.

Record number of invites received this month: 176 for the 'showcase' gig by hot celebrities BAMBI. What is Bambi, anyway, and why does it want to be our friend? Is it the "smudgy ink and urine stains?" (Chatelaine)

**INTERESTING STUFF ABOUT LIFE:** The next HUSKER DU album will be not one album, but two albums. Top 'drug' band THE PINK FLOYD might split up soon. The new BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN album is not one album, but five albums, and it's very popular, even with ordinary folk like me and you. Top 'punk' band THE POLICE don't like each other. Ace 'teen' band THE ROLLIN' STONES sometimes take drugs and sometimes they don't, and sometimes when some of them have taken drugs and some of the other 'Stones' haven't, the ones that haven't get mad at the one's that have, and the one's that have get paranoid and unreasonable (because that's how drugs affect you), and they might split up. The next album from up-and-coming 'garage' band THE REPLACEMENTS might take a long time to make, since lead guitarist BOB STINSON

was ejected from the band because of his rock'n'roll behaviour. The next album from U2 will re-invent rock'n'roll entirely. Toronto boy JOHNNIE LOVESIN is "Toronto's version of Johnny Rotten," according to top pop tabloid *Rock Express*. A member of the Nerve staff has two letters from DOORS lead singer JIM MORRISON, who is dead. A lot of people will drink too much alcohol on December 31st, so if you find yourself in this predicament, don't worry about it—it's all part of growing up. But don't drive. THE RECORD PEDDLER has a new year-end catalogue full of information about fun records and stuff that young Canadians made by themselves. Bassist TRACY PEW died last month as a result of an epileptic fit. He played with THE BIRTHDAY PARTY and NICK CAVE. And a moment of silence, please, for DESI ARNEZ, who died of cancer. His music was an inspiration to us all—especially local 'meta-swing' band WHITENOISE. The Toronto Blues Society was selected the best Blues Society in North America at the recent WC Handy Blues Awards. According to a recent letter sent to us, "The best thing about the November issue was the Subcanus ad text." Glad you liked it.

Jack Slack

## In Crad We Trust

In the realm of small press—a medium made most viable by the constant defusion and resurgence of its writers—Crad Kilodney is a fixture, having stood his ground at Bloor and Yonge for the past nine years.

Kilodney is the sovereign of Toronto street authors. He has honed his talent for the short story to a fine skill, and his three latest publications attest to this.

With *Foul Pus From Dead Dogs* (novelette), *Incurable Trucks & Speeding Diseases*, and *Simple Stories For Idiots* (both collections of shorts), Kilodney is intensifying his satire, applying his deranged wit to more specific elements of mass society. What's odd is that he is more accessible than ever.

Who can resist the tale of Clifford Schnauzer, the best goalie in the Minor Atom AA Hockey League, who sacrifices everything to become an anarchist—on the advice of a tree? Or Magumba, the African native who, after immigrating to Canada, becomes lieutenant-governor of Ontario, only to wed Princess Diana and return to Africa and his tribal ways? Vito Giaboni, the muscled greaser who wakes up after a night of cruising on Yonge St. only to find he has big tits like a woman?

In *Foul Pus* Kilodney documents the complete demise of the Ontario Film Review Board, mercilessly shredding the censors he has only taken stabs at until now.

The new Kilodney classic is *Punishment Subway*, the story of the opening of the 1996 fully-automated Sheppard Ave. subway line, Programmed for Moral Indignation:

...two greaseballs sat talking in a loud voice about a mutual female acquaintance. Their profanity was picked up by the microphones. "...PING...VERBAL INDEX P. TOLERANCE THRESHOLD TEN PER MIN...ALERT... VIOLATION...TWO-SIXTEEN-NINER... MALE PASSENGERS- BELOW THIS SPEAKER, WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE...WARNING."

"Yeah? Fuck you, muthafucka!"  
"Ha! Ha! Yeah, fuck you, asshole!" Two telescoping steel shafts burst through the panel behind them and pierced the greasers in the back. Then the ends of the shafts spread into a fantail of hooks inside their bodies. There was a very short utterance of pain, and then the victims collapsed against their seats, eyes open in a paralyzed shock as blood spurted from their mouths...

Kilodney lurks around the vicinity of Yonge and Bloor most afternoons, weather permitting. He can also be contacted at P.O. Box 281, Station S, Toronto, Ont. M5M 4L7.

Scott Hyrtle

## Not-So-Deep Purple

What is a Purple Toad?

According to Rob Sweeney, the guitarist for the Oshawa ensemble of the same moniker, a Purple Toad is a hallucination some people get after too much alcohol is ingested.

"Some people see Pink Elephants, we see Purple Toads. Originally we were going to be the Purple Horny Toads from Hell."

Well, so much for etymology. What kind of emissions do Purple Toads release into our good, clean air?

Consider the covers the Toads play on their first LP—a treasure-trove of nuggets from the mid-60s: gems like Mouse & the Traps, 'Lie,

Beg, Borrow, & Steal,' or the Easybeats 'Gonna Have A Good Time Tonight.' Imagine these songs run through a cuisinart with the setting on LOUD: DICTATORS/STOOGES. Add the Toads' own self-penned numbers with self-explanatory titles like 'Just Another Stupid Jerk' and 'Forty Pounder Blues' (in which the song's protagonist gets into a fight with a large bottle, with predictable and gory results) and you get a good idea of their musical and philosophical outlook on life.

The Toads were not always this shade of purple. Five years ago, the core members of the group, Sweeney, Roger Branton (bass, vocals) and Paul MacNeil (guitar, vocals) first surfaced in a group named after the stolen car in *Clockwork Orange*—Durango 95 (a good three and a half years before the Ramones copied the idea for their *Too Tough To Die* LP).

The Durangos even managed to release an album, *Lose Control*, on Oshawa's Star Records a couple of years back that got reviews in such redoubtable publications as *Trouser Press* and *Maximum R'n'R*.

However, there wasn't enough work on the Toronto club circuit to keep the interest of several members, and the band folded... only to be resurrected as an amphibious unit, and in the words of Sweeney, "not as 'serious' as Durango."

The band has not played Toronto on a regular basis, so you can be excused if you haven't heard the Toads. Don't lump the Toads with the Paisley/Garage contingent either—they do covers from that era, but they don't get lost in the Vox/Rickenbacker puritanism. They have my vote of confidence... B.F. "Neat, Neat, Neat" Mowat





A Bag of Bones - Rick McGinnis

## King Rick Rock gets a BIG BONE

Fishbone is music for the hard-of-rhythm. Funk writ large. Three out of five lab rats that wouldn't move to Fishbone were found to be dead. Like a speed suppository washed down by a cocaine enema, Fishbone seek to alter your mind through your ass. I guess that's where this story starts, with my ass. (Always a fascinating subject, *Butt Rock* —Ed.)

I sat on it while I shat the shit with Fishbone lead singer Angelo C. Moore. We tied verbal knots on subjects ranging from songs on their latest album, *In Your Face*, to the almighty and the hereafter. I stood up and took my ass with me, though burdened already by newfound wisdom. Now dig this.

'Cholly'?

"It's about this fat porno star, man, this real big woman. It's not talkin' bad about fat people, it's talkin' about how good, and how jolly the flubber looks! When she moves? When she's movin'? And the fat shakes? It's happy, man. Make you laugh!

Thig Pies?

"Thig pies, man. Thick thighs! Pig thighs! I just call 'em thig pies."

'Knock It'? Sex?

"Shit, it could be about fuckin' a chick, man. It could be about a dance. It could be about jackin' off. All those things, yeah. Kingin' your Kong. Don't let the girls go knockin' ya wrong. So you'd better make sure they on the pill, so they don't get knocked up and go knockin' ya wrong."

God?

"You got Satan the Devil and he's workin' on the whole system of things. You got Satan on one side and you got God on the other side. The people that don't want peace, all this confusion, man. The government—that's the Devil, man!

"He's doin' all that. That's the only thing that can make man do what he does. The only thing. People who want to get together, man, that's totally different from the dark side."

Subliminal Fascism?

"People have problems that they can't work out. So their sense cracks. I read the paper and I watch the news. It don't give me the blues, it just gives me the blacks. Starvation on the radio, they don't play the facts, they just play the cracker-jacks. So you'd better wake up, U.S. You can save money if you trust Uncle Sam. And his Congress bullshit. T.V. the sublime seducer. It will run your life. Follow the rules and forget the bomb. Communistical patriotic. The plan is subtle and it's in the open. Kingpin's Nazi scheme gettin' under your skin. So you'd better wake up U.S. Subliminal Fascism."

Fishbone?

"It's not just entertainment, man. If you're into listening to music, if you're into becoming music, make yourself the music and lettin' music take you over, or the lyrics, or the feeling, or the attitude, and if it's a positive thing, that's all you need, man. That's not just entertainment, it's a lesson. It's a feeling, you know what'm sayin'?"

Drugs?

"We don't take drugs, man! We were on this video show. Not Much Music. It's this little one, man. And the V.J., he was actin' cool and everything, right, and we were talkin' blah blah blah, and we were gettin' riled up and shit. And then this woman told me that she got balled out by this V.J. on..."

Toronto Rocks?

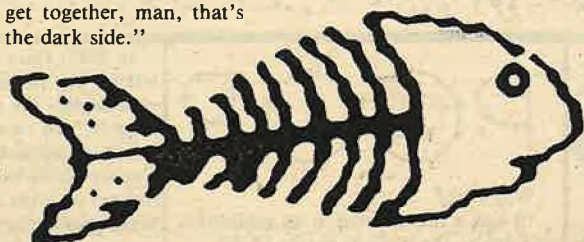
"Yeah!"

Brad Giffen?

"Yeah! He thought we were on drugs. He thought we were high and drunk. He said he did not want us on their show anymore. He's a big shithead. A big shithead! Quote from Angelo."

Future?

"I wanna make a live record. A five album live record. And people'll tear up the store tryin' to get it."



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Tues 16: **Steven C.**  
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Wed 17: **Hunting Party**  
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**South Of France**

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Noxious Art

It is a crowded Thursday night at Toronto's infamous Brunswick House, and the cavernous booze hall is filling up, mostly with large groups of students, who will proceed to consume draft beer by the tray, and then bellow the musical hits of yesteryear at the top of their lungs.

And as the beer glasses empty, the students will grow restless, pounding their fists against the tables, mounting the long wooden benches in hand-clapping fury, and shouting their appreciation to the middle-aged house singer who, night after night, whips them into a frenzy.

"Why is it that everyone thinks the Brunswick is filled with drunks? We don't get seedy people in here you know!"

The woman's name is Rockin' Irene, and she approaches the stage rimmed with circus-lights with her deadpan pianist Carla, as she has done every night of the week (except Sundays) for the last dozen years.

Carla lets a few notes escape from the badly tuned piano, and Irene launches into a punchy rendition of 'Roll Out the Barrel' in the trademark Mermanesque voice that has grown to be synonymous with the raucous charm of the Brunswick House. By the first chorus, a large group of overly exuberant students at the front of the hall have joined in the song, their arm-locked bodies uniformly swaying in mock reverence. By the end of the number, almost half the audience is singing and foot-stomping in a united, intoxicated effort "to get the blues on the run."

"I consider myself a very Continental type; I definitely prefer the European style of entertaining."

Irene segues into her second song of the night, "Daisy," and by the second chorus she is joined onstage by a glassy-eyed male no more than 20 years of age. He drunkenly lumbers up to Irene and embraces her in a maternal bear hug, the top of his head barely reaching her chin. Meanwhile, Irene hasn't missed a word, and as she discreetly attempts to free herself from the boy's clutches, he hugs her tighter, resting his head on her bosom, turning toward the audience to reveal a frozen, dumbfounded grin that is stretched from ear to ear. The audience shrieks their approval until another young man pries his love-struck friend away from the unperturbed chanteuse.

"A drunk is never hard to handle; I just soothe them with my songs. It's the sober ones who are difficult."

Irene then watches the pair manoeuvre toward the side exit, where they collapse in a graceless heap, and she pauses momentarily to say, "Good night, boys!" The audience erupts with laughter before resuming "Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer too..." It is early May and final exams have just finished; the crowd is in extremely good spirits, and the night's antics are far from over.

"When I sing, I like to get people involved and have some fun; people are too serious these days."

A huge, pot-bellied man with a pair of spoons in hand, takes his turn with Irene on stage. He begins to produce a rhythmic clacking with his makeshift instrument, and Irene soon accompanies him with a magically summoned, bright red kazoo. Carla remains calm,

as always, her hands continuing to bang the keys of the battered upright. Between the three of them an impromptu jam session develops, with Irene even feigning a few soft-shoe shuffles in her high heels. The crowd is very, very happy.

"I like torch songs and blues songs, songs that are sultry, emotional, and sexual. 'Stormy Weather' is one of my favourites."

The fare of the evening is mainly sing-alongs interspersed with ballads, show tunes, some 50's pop songs, and the obligatory happy birthday ("to Leslie, who's just turned 19 and is having her first glass of beer... bless her sweet heart!"). All are delivered with equal parts nostalgic fondness, tongue-in-cheek, and youthful zest; since Irene's reign at The Brunswick House, the patronage has gradually evolved from older, working-class European men to white, middle-class students.

"I love young people because I can relate to them. There's no generation gap in my hotel."

The Brunswick House is Irene's hotel. Single handedly, she has developed Toronto's only audience participation cabaret, where customers are applauded for leaping on stage. Still, Irene exercises a distinctive control over the massive tavern ("I insist that my audience listen") in the way that Edith Piaf and Judy Garland did years before the average Brunswick House patron was born. And despite the students' collective rationalization that it is only the "kitschy" quality of Irene's performance that they like, it can't be denied that many of them know, word for word, the lyrics of such dying classics as 'Harvest Moon' and 'I Left My Heart In San Francisco.'

## she's rockin'



Rockin' Irene — Lynn Farrell

For many of the youngsters who flock to see her, the appeal of Irene is that of a walking history book: an actual glimpse of the vaudeville era, when the standard of live entertainment was a husky voiced singer with a honky tonk piano, staging improvised shows in smoky halls in which the washrooms were unapologetically filthy. Essential to the vaudeville performer's success was a humanistic rapport with the audience, a facet of Irene that may have developed in her former career as a social worker in her native Ottawa. Ironically, it was with juvenile delinquents that she exclusively worked.

"I used to say I was a social worker by day, and a sociable worker by night!"

Consequently, when she relates stories of the antics of university students (from ripping the keys off of the house piano to charging into the Brunswick House with goalposts stolen from Varisty Arena) she does so with a smile.

"Gee, I love those university students. They really know how to have fun!"

It is the end of the night, and Irene is midway through her final number, Sinatra's 'New York'. Thirty or so young people have joined her in a Rockette style chorus line, each one doing high kicks as though it was the dance craze of the 80s.

Anchoring the chorus line, way off to stage left, is Irene herself, a solitary member of a tipsey human chain that is growing larger and larger as the song proceeds to its climax. And as the last notes resound off the mullered ceiling of the Brunswick House, Irene glows, content in the knowledge that the kids are alright.

by ROB HOUGH

Let's go back over ten years to December '75, long before there was anything resembling an alternative music press in Toronto. Anybody who was looking for anything interesting and exciting in pop and rock music either delved into Rock's illustrious past (the \$1.99 bin at K-Mart), bought the few decent mainstream releases available (c.f. the Replacements' set list) or scanned the pages of *Cream* or *Bomp* for Lester Bangs and Greg Shaw's lucid insights into sounds that had been bypassed by the rock establishment.

This was when Gary "Pig" Gold first published *The Pig Paper*. "When the Who played the Gardens in Dec. '75, a bunch of us did the routine of standing in line for tickets for several days—we even made a the six o'clock news—only to find out that the best seats had been taken by friends of the promoter, press people, politicians, and other dubious sorts. So we decided to create an 'unofficial' concert guide to air our complaints about the concert and the way MCA was handling the releases in Canada. We got harassed by management—but we did sell a lot of papers. Eventually, I decided to carry on the name with a semi-regular publication.



POCKET PIG PAPER  
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## PIG POOP

Why Pigs?

"I had a film entered in an exhibition, and due to the libelous nature of the film we needed a name for our production company. One morning, I was pouring some breakfast cereal into a bowl and a little plastic pig fell out."

Pig Paper is arguably the first and the best fanzine to emerge from Canada. It was the first fanzine to document the Canadian punk explosion of 1976-77, with controversial coverage of local bands like the Viletones, the Dishes (hey—didya know that former Dish Murray Ball now runs RPM Club?) and the late, great Simply Saucer, who recorded a 45 in 1978 on the Pig record label. ('She's a Dog' b/w 'I Can Change My Mind') that received considerable attention outside of this country.

The fanzine, which started out as a crude Xerox with a circulation of several hundred, grew sophisticated, by fanzine standards, with a circulation of 5,000 readers that spanned the globe.

In 1982, Gary dropped everything and left for the sunny skies of California to contemplate the meaning of Jan & Dean records, and vainly crack into the pop/rock market with his Orange County-based band the Loved Ones. He put out an issue of *Pig* in California before being forcibly removed to Vancouver, where he donned the 7-11 colours for some real work. He has since returned to his old Port Credit sty, publishing single sheet editions of the *Pig Paper* between gigs with a bogus Beach Boy band called Endless Summer (who recently played The Concert Hall in Toronto, opening for a team of 50 mud wrestlers).

You can't begin to perceive the cultural importance of *Pig*. He was the first to champion local musical talents (both of them!), while such unsung greats as 1/2 Japanese, Wild Man Fischer, Blowfish, and Jandek received their first inklings of exposure in the pages of *Pig*. As Peter Townshend once said of Alexis Korner, "he should be carried around in a sedan chair for the rest of his life."

For more information write: *The Pig Paper*, 70 Cotton Drive, Mississauga, Ont., L5G 1Z9 by B.F. MOWAT



# SÉD



★ "He was caught in part of a police plan to clean up the streets. They were picking up anyone who looked like a vagrant." NICK CAVE's publicist, Chris Clunn, shortly after the pop singer's arrest for impersonating a zombie. Unfortunately, jolly St. Nick was exonerated pronto.

★ "You berk! What happened, did you win this job in a raffle?"

MOTORHEAD fecal matter LEMMY KILMINSTER, to Nerve photo-ed. Chris Buck, who insisted in zooming in on the Lem's conceptual warts. Buck is pictured here with close friends Peter Buck of REM, and Bruce Springsteen of The Rolling Stones.

★ "This is a reciprocal rock 'n' roll love feeling." Photo-ed. CHRIS BUCK validating the job he won in a raf...NOPE, sorry, that quote was actually the most intelligent thing MISSION berk WAYNE HUSSEY recently quoth about life since SISTERS OF MERCY...

★ "It's a spit-in-your-eye mishmash of grating graphics and strident copy..." Toronto Life magazine, on NERVE. Someday, kids, you'll be famous for your spit-in-the-eye mishmash, too. Until then, do it Nerve style. Grate those graphics! Copy those stridents! Spit in people's eyes! Subscribe to Toronto Life!

★ "He's Canada's Greatest Human, taking over from William Shatner." The NME's Dessa Fox reviewing the latest DAVE HOWARD SINGERS single, a punkin' version of David Essex's 'Rock On.'

★ "Besides being ugly, he's scrawny and sickly pale with only enough muscle to bob his deformed head and make spindly arm and leg movements." Peter Payne on JIMMY SOMMERVILLE, in a Grafitti vid review of the newie by THE COMMUNARDS.

## Hotel isabella

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- 8-9 • Company Town
- 10-11 • Prairie Oyster
- 12 • Jeffrey Hatcher
- 13 • The Phantoms
- 15 • Zootz dance band
- 16 • Big Parade
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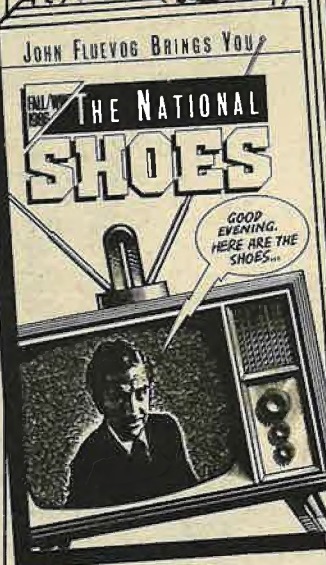
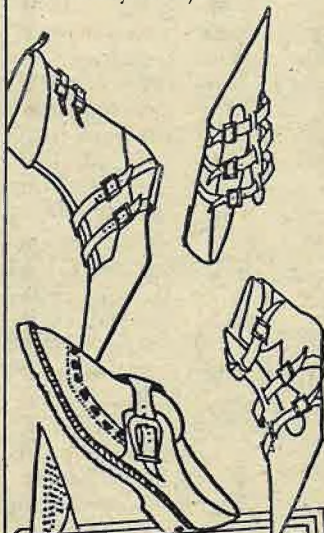
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# JAZZ

TIM POWIS

## THE BRICK BREW FEST

You have to wonder whether the term "New Jazz" has any meaning when a week-long showcase of the stuff includes performances by a maniac pianist who's enjoyed a certain amount of notoriety for 30 years (Cecil Taylor); a fairly conventional funk band (Defunkt); a vitally unconventional funky trio (James 'Blood' Ulmer); a classically conceived, post-bop quartet (Arthur Blythe); four saxophonists who concentrate on the music of Duke Ellington (World Saxophone Quartet); and a somewhat "harmolodic" fusion band (Ronald Shannon Jackson and the Decoding Society). Plus as many equally disparate local bands (but that's another story).

But who cares? You don't attend such auspicious events looking to reaffirm the validity of arbitrariness of labels. You go to listen (this can be difficult in the presence of people who are willing to pay \$10 or \$12 to provide themselves with background music for after-dinner chit-chat) and, in some cases, to flop about like fish out of water.

With the exception of singer-trombonist Joe Bowie's Defunkt, which turned in a workmanlike set of the right beats in the rote order, it was an inspirational week for the New York contingent.

\*\*\*

Cecil Taylor shows up with a six-piece Unit rather than the octet I expected, but no matter. His densely intense piano-pummeling alone is enough to blow the cobwebs out of the mustiest corner of anyone's brain. The set consists of one piece, almost two hours long. It starts quietly, almost tentatively, with Cecil throwing the band a bare melodic bone. They sniff around it gingerly and then, by turns or all together, gnaw on it with mounting savagery until they reach the marrow. The top of Cecil's piano is covered with a disorderly array of his sheet music, which constantly falls onto the keyboard—apparently blown by the sonic wind this unit stirs up—to be swept onto the floor by the blur of the pianist's hands.

Someone crouching on the floor right in front of the stage hollers approval like a sodden football fan whenever Taylor kicks into overdrive. Besides the leader, the most outstanding performers are the hard-blowing reed players, bassoonist Karen Borca and alto saxophonist Carlos Ward (who has filled the vacancy left by the recent death of Jimmy Lyons, Taylor's loyal altoman for 20 years); and drummer Frederick Waits who, perhaps following the example of Shannon Jackson, gives the Unit a sturdier and steadier rhythmic base than previous editions—sometimes he plays almost straight funk beats for the others to swirl around.

Upstairs after the show, his dressing room has a distinct do-not-disturb aura, but gradually friends and well-wishers start trickling in. The aforementioned cheerleader, a well-oiled fanatic in his 40s weaves by with a glass of whisky and disappears into Cecil's lair. Within a couple of minutes he can be clearly heard ranting at his hero with incoherent, stream-of-consciousness enthusiasm. He sounds like he might blow any second, and those of us in the "reception area" look at each other nervously. Thinking Cecil deserves a break today, I enter the room and as soon as the bibulous buff pauses, I ask Taylor if he has time for an interview later, and although he was willing, it hasn't happened. Yet.

★★★★

Early in this decade, altoist Arthur Blythe was being touted by numerous influential jazz critics as the contender for the music's guiding light. With his shiny ebullient tone and formidable skill, he was one of the first of the hip young Big Apple bunch to strike a workable balance between the "tradition" and the "avant garde," and being pretty well the only one signed to a major label, was in a position to get the message across to the multitudes. But in 1984, he put out an album of lightweight, synth-soaked funk and the critical wind no longer blew so strongly into his sails.

"I think I should have the option to deal with all facets of my heritage," says Arthur in his own defence. "And one of the facets is dance music, along with gospel and jazz all the way to rock'n'roll. If I deal with it in an honest and truthful way, I can do anything I want to do. Don't limit me..."

"I read something where one critic was saying I was expected to take John Coltrane's place. But these are things comin' from other people's minds. Then, when I didn't live up to what they expected, I'm out of favour with them."

At least one critic has assumed that his record company, Columbia, put him up to the offending album. Not so, says Blythe.

"It was my decision. Probably they were glad that I did it, but it wasn't like they put me in the hammer-lock."

"I have a wife and two children and I want to make money in the music. I don't want to be a part of, like, jazz musicians paying unmerciful dues and never makin' any money and all that. I don't like that."

Live, Blythe ultimately delivers the goods that earned him all the accolades, although he gets off to a slow start. Pianist John Hicks in particular spurs him onto some impassioned saxophonics, and plays a transcendent solo that perfectly synthesizes the styles of McCoy Tyner and Cecil Taylor. After hearing this music, Blythe's defence can rest.

★★★★

Ronald Shannon Jackson is the only one of these cats I managed to interview face to face. Part way through our talk, locals Not King Fudge take to the downstage and Shannon is soon talking over the strains of 'Ghosts,' the tune written by the late saxophonist Albert Ayler, who was once Jackson's employer.

Ask Shannon what he's been up to lately and you can write off the next 20 minutes. He and bassist Bill Laswell are the rhythm section on Blood Ulmer's upcoming Blue Note LP (due in early '87). He and his Decoding Society have been touring steadily, and have an album coming out on the Caravan of Dreams label, which is based out of an arts complex in his old home town, Fort Worth, Texas. This fall he's been touring Japan and Europe with Last Exit, an insane crew (Jackson, Laswell, Saxophonist Peter Brotzmann and the infamous Sonny Sharrock on guitar) whose music can best be described as freely improvised heavy metal. While in Japan, Last Exit recorded a second album which will include some keyboard work by Herbie Hancock of all people. Last summer, Jackson was in T.O. with trombonist Craig Harris' Tailgater Tales.

Jackson would like to play with other people, too—Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Chaka Khan, Ray Charles, Eddie Van Halen, Run-DMC, B.B. King, Santana—and is pretty sure he will be playing with Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter (presumably at the same time).

Jackson composes all the Decoding Society's intricate melodies on the flute. "I have a gift, that when I hear something I can hear it in four dimensions, basically... I hear a melody and I write it down." He doesn't tape these melodies, partly because he's had no stereo equipment since his son Talkey took apart his turntable and put it back together again, leaving a few Crayolas inside.

Cecil Taylor — Mike Dyer





Shannon Jackson — Heather Blurton

Jackson has lived in New York for 20 years (he just bought a house in Harlem), and finds plenty of musical inspiration there. "There are certain places I can be walking in New York and I will always hear something, like 42nd Str. There are spots that are magnetic points..." These spots are also sprinkled all over the globe: the Louvre, Trafalgar Square, the Berlin Zoo, the Thieves' Market in Jakarta, Indonesia—Shannon, a Buddhist for 12 years, is a bit of a mystic, but he's quite down-to-earth about drumming.

"I'm playing from a definite rhythmic concept. I'm not searching. I know what is going on when I'm doing it."

That much is very apparent during the Decoding Society's set. If you walked in knowing nothing about them you'd realize immediately that this is the drummer's band, even though he only plays one (astounding) solo all night. He never looks at the drums—he shakes his head slowly back and forth, smiling, eyes closed, as he lays down complex, shifting rhythms with more physical force than most rock drummers use to beat out much simpler patterns. His music has become much more accessible since the inception of the Decoding Society: the melodies have the same flavour, but they were once set against conflicting keys, now they're more often set against fairly consonant harmonies, with no loss of power. Nowadays Last Exit is the outlet for his out-to-lunch impulses.

★★★★

While I respect **The World Saxophone Quartet's** refusal to use microphones, I question the wisdom of not bending a bit for a club as acoustically poor (and as full of dedicated conversationalists) as the Bamboo. But with intense concentration, it's obvious they're in good form.

That's more than I can say for Julius Hemphill and David Murray the next morning when I called them at their hotel (The other two members are Oliver Lake and Hamiet Blueitt).

Julius sounds either burnt right out or like I just woke him (which he assures me I didn't). He talks very slowly, with long pauses to summon up thoughts that he'd probably rather sleep on.

"I'm workin' on what you might call a saxophone opera...It's a music theatre peice set in a club in (Washington) D.C. It's going to be presented at the Duke Ellington School of Fine Arts there. It focusses on the period of about 1940 at least to 1968. See, it's about this club called the Bohemia Cavern."

The sax opera will be presented in workshop form in February, using the Quartet and actors and musicians from Washington. He also plans to get his electric JAH band (which has recorded one magnificent album called *Georgia Blue*) back together.

What's the first item on the agenda when you get back to New York?

"Finding me a work bench," he drawls. He laughs wearily. "And some pencils."

David Murray's voice is so hoarse I figure I woke him up, too. But no, he's just caught a cold.

The hottest tenor player under the age of 50, Murray gets around musically. An album of duets with drummer Jack DeJohnette is forthcoming on a Japanese label, and an album with Blood Ulmer (guitar), Fred Hopkins (bass) and Sunny Murray (the pioneer of arhythmic, free jazz drumming) is already out although its chances of reaching Canada are extremely remote.

Is it true Mick Jagger wanted Murray to play with him?

"Yeah, he wanted me to play on his solo album, but ended up gettin' David Sanborn. He didn't want to pay no money, so—uh, I don't care about Mick Jagger." You'd thing. Mick could afford to pay, I offer. "Yeah, that's what I figure," agrees Dave.

He'd like to play with Stevie Wonder; "Do a solo on his album or something. Shit like that, with people who's music I like. Not that I wanna go on the road with 'em. Just to do an album would be nice, with somebody in the pop field."

★★★★

It's all over. **James 'God' Ulmer** has just finished the jazz week with the most consistently ecstatic set of droning, rusticated funk I've ever heard him play. Bassist Amin Ali discusses a band he's got going with Calvin Weston (Blood's drummer tonight), Charles Ellerbee (Ornette Coleman's guitarist) and an unknown Irish woman on keyboards, and talks about how "you have to have curly hair and look like a faggot" to cut it in the music biz these days. Blood appears, smiling contentedly, and a Nerve person approaches him. "I thought you'd be exhausted after that," she says. "I am, baby. I am."



Julius Hemphill: Myke Dyer



# BLOWED UP REAL GOOD

by PHILLIP DELLIO



The smart guy in Sique Sique — William

hortly after Dave Rave and I interviewed Sique Sique Sputnik's Martin Degville in the Westbury Hotel restaurant, I found myself witness to a person drinking himself into a spiteful, loathsome, self-pitying stupor. This person—who also writes about pop—brooded at length about a number of things, but particularly focused on his estrangement from the music that once meant so much to him; he felt like someone "unstuck in time," and what's worse, hadn't a clue what to do about it.

The following interview should speak for itself, but keep "unstuck in time" at your fingertips for context. Also, for reasons that will later become clear, you might want to read Peter Guralnick's chapter on Charlie Rich in *Lost Highway*; if Guralnick had never written anything else in his life, that one chapter would be enough to make you want to meet him. That, according to Holden Caulfield, is how you're supposed to feel about good writing.

Ready Marty? Let's open up and have a real bad time...

DAVE: So, are you rich yet?  
MARTIN: Rich? Rich in personality I would say, but no, we're not rich. I don't have millions of pounds in the bank.

PHIL: Didn't you get all that money (the four million pounds EMI UK were said to have paid for the pleasure of Sputnik's company) up front?  
M: We got all that money. But we're wise you know, we spend it.

D: I've just been reading the recent NME cover story. Paul Morley stitched you up.

M: I think Paul really, really liked us, but I think he was a bit jealous because of his own involvement with Frankie Goes to Hollywood. But it doesn't make any difference anymore; so much of the English press tried to stitch this group up and completely destroy us, but it just makes us seem more important. At the very beginning we had great press, and now we're suffering the backlash.

D: You actually had good press at one point? What was the focus of attention?

M: It was a blaze of glory; this group had emerged that was so different to what pop was. All that journalists had to write about the last six years were Duran Duran, Wham!,

Culture Club, and all those safe groups who really had nothing to say for themselves. And then along came Sique Sique Sputnik, saying this is the new attitude, the new approach.

D: It seems you have this aura where you can say outrageous things and 'be' an outrageous group—period.

M: But that's the personality of the group, that's why it's not contrived. We're not completely dependent on the music, whereas I think most groups are. All they have to survive on at the end of the day is what music they can actually write. We're not really about that—SSS is taking rock'n'roll out of rock'n'roll, and adapting it to and exploiting other media.

D: But you exploit yourself, too.

M: Yeah, I exploit every single inch of me.

D: Are you satisfied with that? What's going to be left when the band runs its course and you're all businessmen?

M: But I don't see it as a band. I see it as an organization, a corporation...

P: What about someone like Alan Vega? He's not too amused by SSS. Ric Ocasek said Vega might even put a contract out on you—he's really mad you look all his stuff.

M: Took all his stuff?

P: Yeah, you did.

M: No we didn't.

P: Yes you did.

M: No we didn't.

P: Yes you did.

M: No way.

P: Everything on *Haint It* is taken from the first Suicide album.

M: Of course it isn't. It's given Alan Vega and Suicide credibility and if he's clever enough he'll monopolize on it. Suicide never wrote great tunes.

P: They were much, much

better; they wrote great pop songs like 'Cheree.'

M: That's just a classic chrd-justice rock'n'roll song—no great tune to it. They were great and very avant-garde for their time, and you could say that SSS have been influenced to a certain extent by Suicide, but you can also say that we've been influenced by Marc Bolan and Eddie Cochran and Elvis.

P: What about Kiss—were they a big influence?

M: All that Kiss did was get on stage and make a lot of noise. I hate them. They were completely theatrical. When we go on stage, it's part of my life.

D: Are you aware of the skepticism towards a band as image-conscious as SSS? I know the rifts are there, but you're never going to be able to be photographed in jeans and a t-shirt.

M: I don't have jeans and a t-shirt. Most people have to go out and buy style, like those people in Kiss, but I'm capable of making myself look interesting. There's an errant sense of style that comes through.

D: But that can be used against you, like NME putting you on the cover with the caption, 'Would You Pay 4 Million For this Crap?'

M: So what? It's a joke that someone should ignore all the other facts about this group, and just pick apart the image...

P: You say your music is threatening... What kind of person do you think buys your record?

M: Someone with good taste, someone with imagination. It's not just buying the album, it's like buying a piece of SSS, a piece of the event, a piece of history.

P: But what about eight months down the road, when all

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# Strength

Listen up. Captain Beefheart is alive, and making great rock music in Australia under the pretext that life is for those who are alive. He's ditched the trendy 'Don Van Vliet' moniker for the more mundane 'Mark Seymour', and he's ten times fitter and eleven times madder.

(Nope. Sacrilegious.)

Pere Ubu didn't break up for the benefit of good karma; they're to be found in the beer halls of Oz churning up a strange and bitter brew. The singer is leaner and meaner, but his new band Hunters and Collectors are as brilliant as ever.

(Nope. Bullshit. Forget it.)

All jesting aside, Hunters & Collectors are a very (your word here—anyone can play this game) band from Australia. I really had no justification in exploiting the good names of Pere Ubu or Mr. Beefheart, I just wanted to get your attention with some impressive improbability...because that's sort of what Hunters & Collectors do. Put it this way—their rock music is certainly a lot more

than just telling fibs to a neutral beat.

(Cue: 'buy new album' jargon.)

The new album *Human Frailty* plays itself the music of madness on the other side of the world. It's a terrific record, based on the liquidation of an ill-founded relationship between a person (who fluctuates between first person, second person, third person, and person?) and singer/lyricist/guitarist Mark Seymour.

As Seymour states on his cunningly succinct press handout, 'We believe that music has the power to really move people by appealing to the most commonplace aspects of human feeling...Our music is raw and elemental, expressing emotion in its most basic form.' Indeed, cuts like 'Everything's On Fire,' 'Dog,' 'The Finger,' shit, all of them are unique because the rock lyric, for once, doesn't explicitly *talk down* to you, the rock person.

But you've ultimately got to wonder exactly where issues of *Human Frailty* belong in the crazy world of R&R. According to Seymour, getting away with it is "a fairly difficult task. Commercial rock & roll is dull because it can't deal with the underbelly of experience. We speak on several levels anyway—most people don't listen to lyrics for a start, so...we're still considered pretty weird, even though (in Australia) we're now part of the mainstream."

Very ironic. Is a mainstream audience equipped to make sense of the shapes Collectors are making?

by DAVE RAVE



the copies of *Haunt II* are in delete bins alongside Mojo Roper and His Moon Men? You'll have your millions, but one day you're going to feel foolish about the whole thing. It's bound to happen.

M: I don't think so, because I think an awful lot of people will pick up on *Haunt II*. Even though people disregard it now, with what we'll be doing in eight months time, people will go back to that initial album. The thing is, you have to establish the whole idea of the group and the sound of the group. And I think we've done that with *Haunt II*. It's a great title—it's magnificent.

P: The Jesus and Mary Chain are radical—you're as safe a band as there is today. I can't believe you've fooled yourself into thinking you're radical.

M: What's so dangerous about the Jesus & Mary Chain?

P: They upset people. We're not allowed to play *Psychocandy* where I work, but nobody even notices when your record is thrown on. It blends in with everything else.

M: I really don't think so. I suppose *Massive Retaliation* blends in with... I completely disagree.

P: Then how come nobody raises an eyebrow?

M: They're probably all mentally retarded in the part of town where you live. They must be. You obviously have your opinion, and thanks for telling me—don't buy another SSS album.

P: Don't buy another SSS album?

M: Don't even bother with SSS, because I really don't give a shit. Enough people like it, and enough people will continue to like what products SSS put out. I think we've spearheaded a new way of

thinking in rock'n'roll, and I think the next generation will be following SSS.

D: What do you think will be written about SSS in the rock histories? What will be your paramount achievement?

M: When we detonate ourselves on stage.

P: Everything you've said: do you honestly believe yourself, or have you just trained yourself to keep a straight face? When you say Sputnik are revolutionary, when you say you have sex appeal, when you say you'll be around for 12 years: how do you do it? Is it just from saying these things often enough?

M: I really, honestly believe it.

P: You really, honestly believe it.

M: ...I say with a big smile on my face (laughs).

I don't blame Degville for laughing. Surely everyone at one time has felt helpless arguing over something that transcended subjective taste or opinion: that the average sitcom isn't particularly funny, that award shows don't necessarily reward merit, that politics do not exactly inspire sincerity. Leaving the Westbury, I felt like a schmuck for wasting so much vehemence on such a complete and impenetrable void.

Once at the Diamond Club, however—where Degville and a hapless Sputnik mate were being circulated around the room for the edification of a herd of lost souls—it became clear that the interview had not been conducted in vain. Some folks from Capitol informed us that Marty was "upset" about the way we had treated an artist of his stature; oblivious to the joke, we had held him accountable as part of the human race, and that just wasn't fair.

Completely filled with self-gratification by these pronouncements—as well as a shitload of Black Label—I proceeded to take the whole charade a step too far. When Marty suddenly materialized in front of me during his travels about the room, I boldly tried to renew acquaintances: first I assured him that he was 30 times the jerk we had credited him with being, and then, in a final fit of inspiration, I suggested that he might like to take a swing at me. He didn't, but a Capitol rep almost did. The entire incident flashed by in a second: I somehow doubt that it will go down in history alongside Jim in Miami and Elvis Costello's brush with Bonnie Bramlett. It was stupid, and I owe Capitol an apology, as soon as they publicly issue one for Sique Sique Sputnik in general, they'll have one.

So what exactly did I carry away from all this excitement and adventure? Why, an autographed album, of course. As soon as we finished up our business at the Westbury, Marty was kind enough to sign a copy of *The Fabulous Charlie Rich* I happened to have with me. As if in a trance, this is what he wrote: RICH RICH AND RICH RICH RICH AND POOR POOR POOR POOR YOU GREAT REGARDS AND MUCH ADO. ADO ADO TAMMY DEGVILLE. Vertically, with no punctuation—right beside the Silver Fox's staring profile.

I'm not sure what TAMMY is supposed to signify—or at least I wouldn't want to speculate—but I do believe that Marty means for me to feel lousy about my life. He couldn't have been blessed with a better album to sign. *The Fabulous Charlie Rich* is a record I always play when drunk and feeling sorry for myself, my two favorite

pastimes. However, he betrays the limits of his imagination. I've felt sorry for myself over the years for a variety of reasons—from unrequited love to not getting played on my grade 9 basketball team to feeling lost and insignificant in university to unrequited love to the sinking sensation of writing in a vacuum to unrequited love—but I can't ever remember feeling bad about not having as much money as someone else. The very idea seems absurd; not least of all when you consider how easy it is to accumulate money if you put everything else about your life on hold. Charlie Rich had a pile of money by 1976, and, as his wife Margaret hinted at to Guralnick, he felt miserable: "I think it's almost a tragedy when you lose your enthusiasm for something that suited you... It turns into a business, and it just about destroys your creativity."

Well, fuck... the last little while, there have actually been moments at work when I felt like crying: eight-hour assaults of contemptible horseshit ranging from Wang Chung to OMD to Icehouse; a customer flashing some New Order remix in my face and asking, "Is this on the new album?"; being discouraged from playing Patsy Cline or the Spaniels because "they don't generate sales"; being forbidden to play Husker Du or the Mary Chain. It all adds up to the disheartening realization that I have literally nothing in common with the people whom most of my time is spent with. Going to work has become akin to visiting a foreign country: strange faces, unfamiliar surroundings, different language.

The problem is me, of course, because I take pop music far too seriously. Since I was ten, it's the one thing I've cared about deeply: virtually

all my free time has been devoted to listening, talking or thinking about it; most every decision I've made has, in one convoluted way or another, been influenced by it. It's very painful to see the form abused or treated casually, and it's very humbling to encounter people daily who could never understand why someone might feel that way.

Let's draw up a list: Buddy Holly, the Everly Brothers, 'A Thousand Miles Away,' Richie Valens, Arlene Smith, 'There Goes My Baby,' the Crystals, Brian Wilson, Smokey Robinson, the Beatles, the Byrds, 'Uptight (Everything's Alright),' Highway 61 Revisited, The Velvets, Aretha Franklin, Janis Joplin, the Stooges, *Exile on Main Street*, the Dolls, the Spinners, Joey Ramone, Sid Vicious, 'Alternative Ulster,' the Undertones, Wild Gift, Bob

Mould, the Replacements, 'When I Think of You,' *Psychocandy*. It's a list which has been subjectively weighted, but it's also fairly broad and accommodating. If nothing there means anything to you, if you've never turned to any of those people when feeling depressed, angry, joyous or lonely, then you and I are worlds apart. As bluntly as I can put it, you have not earned the right to listen to, or claim to be a fan of, or even speak the name of the music that means so much to me.

That's where my problems with Martin Degville begin, and that's why I too feel "unstuck in time."



The boys in the band: Viliam

# Through Frailty

Seymour votes 'yes.'

"I don't see that people are as stupid as rock groups—and the media—make them out to be. Hunters & Collectors were initially perceived as a bunch of weirdos, and then it gradually became apparent to people that there was something humorous about us, even though the music was bleak and serious and heavy and dark..."

"By continually doing the bar circuit, people got used to the idea that this was the level which we expressed ourselves on. And everyone's mentally equipped to deal with us!"

As far back as I can remember, these Hunters & Collectors have been impressed with the vulgarity of their own music. And even as you ingest this 'buy the album' jargon; according to Seymour's press handout, the expressed goal of this band is "to show that life is a serious undertaking." Thousands of bands (hundreds in Toronto alone) have failed this, largely because they automatically assume a 'miserabilist' stance. But Hunters & Collectors suppress their need to hammer home their wisdom long enough to laugh at themselves and the business they're in.

One early song from the first album, 'Towtruck,' documented some kind of surreal R&R ordeal with hilarious one-liners and non-sequiturs ('somebody stole my bloody wheelchair!'), and the two albums that followed (*The*

*Fireman's Curse* in '84, *The Jaws Of Life* last year) were equally side splitting if you probed deep enough into the dour mash. "Do you think I'm sweating like this just for fun?" asks Seymour in 'Betty's Worries Or The Slab,' and it's just a whole bunch of fun.

But the new album is serious business from start to finish. Seymour has fully measured the breadth of his lyrical capabilities, and on *Human Frailty* he involves us in matters of an intensely personal nature. The question is, who's listening?

"The people who appreciate it most are about my age (30), and they've seen a bit of action, had a few affairs, taken drugs and drank a lot. But the people you're trying to convince, in my business, are the teenies. Now, the biggest difficulty we have is that we are *frightening*. I mean, 'Say goodbye' is a rather forlorn song about female domination."

I thought it was about passive guilt.

"I used to have interminable arguments with my old girlfriend about how culpable the entire male sex was, and our responsibility for all things that were wrong with the world, and how every male should bear the burden of our collective responsibility. Initially I bought the idea, but on a one-to-one basis, I couldn't help but notice that there were frequently situations where she had *power*; she controlled me.

"How could feminists argue that men are entirely culpable, when if you bring it down to the basic

unit—men and women—there's a constant interplay of power. And it's such a big deal! As a result of conducting our relationship in this self-analytical way, we ended up breaking up. So I eventually wrote the lyric about a woman being the dominator, but leaving certain things open to interpretation."

But generally speaking, this album is more specific than the elusive, slightly insane imagery Seymour conjured up in past songs, such as 'Judas Sheep,' 'Egghart,' (a song about "having the soul of a hard-boiled egg"), 'Blind Snake Sundae,' and other massive pop hits.

"I used to take a very intellectual approach with what individual words symbolized and the senses the text generated, by putting together words that had opposite dynamic feelings. I used to treat words as this *stuff* you could just *play with*. But now I don't agree with that anymore. I've just become more confident with the way in which I can use words. Maybe more sophisticated."

The next LP will be more concerned with the politics of the world and the stuff in it, than the politics of the 'me' 'you' and 'us' game. But really, why bother? The only successful political record of this generation had, as its key lyric, "Feed the world/Let them know it's Christmas time."

"I'm just concerned about...nothing more than describing the world. And life. And being in the world. That's all!"



Mark Seymour — Heather Blorton



# STEADY

Rick McGinnis gets to shake, rattle and Rolo

"Me and the Devil were walkin' side by side  
Me and the Devil were walkin' side by side  
I'm gonna beat my woman  
Till I get satisfied"

Robert Johnson.  
'Me and the Devil Blues.'

"It's about time we were happy  
It's about time we should cry out!  
Get it on, fall down, mess around."

The Woodentops,  
'Get It On.'

**W**e don't have that much of a rock and roll attitude," Rolo McGinty, the leader of the Woodentops tells me. "We don't piss it up every night, we don't take loads of cocaine, we don't fuck every night, we don't..." Rolo stops and turns to keyboardist Alice Thompson. "What do we do?"

Rolo and Alice, along with Simon, Benny and Frank, are the Woodentops. The English band play the usual assortment of bass, drums, guitar, keys, etc., in the most frenetic, indescribable fashion. They have a bunch of singles, and an album, *Giant*, that you can get here. While their sound is enough to set them apart, their attitude, or philosophy, or whatever, is probably the most revolutionary approach I've ever encountered growing out of the often objectionable beast, rock and roll.

Robert Johnson was the father of that beast. The legendary Delta blues singer died sometime around 1938. His whole catalogue—two LPs worth of songs—was recorded by the Library of Congress from hotel rooms throughout the South. Probably the most haunting records ever made, they feature nothing more than Johnson's nimble slide guitar and his wailing, straining, out of key voice. Johnson woke up in the morning, he had "blues walking like a man." He told his woman to "squeeze my lemon till the juice runs down my leg—you know what I mean." He had "stones in my passway," and "a hell hound on my trail." Johnson walked with the Devil and, when he felt the need, he would "beat my woman till I get satisfied."

Brutal, haunted, and undeniably male, Johnson gave birth to the Rock and Roll Thing. He remained an acknowledged, primary influence right into the sixties, when a band like Led Zeppelin would cover Johnson's material, Robert Plant screeching about the functions of his particular lemon.

"I remember we were playing this place in Belgium," Rolo recalls, "and people were throwing chairs over dressing room walls. Loads of bands all being real bastards, listening to Led Zeppelin really loudly to wind each other up. That's the only time I ever entered into the rock and roll thing. I walked straight out of the dressing room right into this room, right to the beatbox and switched it off. There's all these really heavy guys with long hair, and I was pint-sized compared to them, and I was thinking, 'They really beat people, but I'm gonna go ahead. I just hate this so much.'"

"I know the beast in me  
And I know I never invited it in."

'Last Time,' The Woodentops

**M**aybe I don't feel I have a lot of time to do what it is I feel I want to do, but I don't feel cynical at all," Rolo says, and turns to Alice. "Do you feel cynical?"

"No. I think it's a crime."

"I think," says Rolo, "that a lot of people that write about us might be feeling cynical."



Rolo top right — Rick McGinnis

Dominating everything ever written about the Woodentops is surprise, even suspicion, of the optimism that characterizes both the band's lyrics and sound. In the 1980s, any band that sings a song called 'Love Affair With Everyday Living' is decidedly suspect. A bit simpleminded perhaps, or worse, apathetic. We already have, after all, one Jonathan Richman.

"I think people hate us for being cheerful," says Rolo. "I don't now why it is, but... personally, I find that if things are not good for me, if I'm not cheerful in the midst of it all, then I'm pretty well fucked. That's

my personal thing. Some people don't like that. They expect us to be more dour. But I think there's a big enough dour catalogue if they want that."

"I think people see our optimism as a form of naivete, which it isn't. It's more of a sense of realism, a realism that won't be tainted by that sort of defeat. We're anti-apaty very much. It's not a question of hiding our heads in the sand like ostriches."

Overall, you could shrug off what the band says as defensive. They have, after all, been accused of being worse than ingenuine; they've been

called outright stupid. The irony is incredible. The Rolling Stones have never been called stupid, fronted as they are by a former London School of Economics graduate who insists on being Robert Johnson.

"This is a song about Jackie  
Cause he's an ordinary guy  
Like you and me.  
And I met him the other day  
He was peeping out  
From under an eiderdown  
With his big brown eyes.  
Cause you see  
Jackie's dying... slowly."

'Steady, Steady,' The Woodentops

**T**he Woodentops aren't a group of simpletons warbling the praises of keeping a happy face. Underneath the ringing guitars and chiming organ, you'll often find a considerable doubt, pain, and outright fear. As the primary source of the Woodentops inspiration, is Rolo at all hesitant of putting that much of himself on a record, a consumer commodity?

"I guess I really haven't wanted to think about that. There's quite a lot of really personal moments in people's bedrooms, and getting onto a compact disc, but..."

Only twice has Rolo let the Woodentops slide into outright despair, with the droning 'Cold Inside' and, most chillingly, on 'Steady Steady.'

'Steady, Steady' (only available as the b-side of a 12-inch, and on an American compilation) made such an impression that many looked forward to seeing more of that side of the band.

"Jack Barron (Sounds Magazine) wanted us to make a record with a lot of 'Steady, Steady' and 'Cold Inside' on it, and that's fine, and I'm really pleased that he likes that side of the band," says Rolo, "but to be honest with you, if we had done that, we wouldn't be here now."

'Steady, Steady' is an eerie, ebbing song, with vocals, acoustic guitar and organ flowing in and out while Rolo whispers about Jackie, a friend who, due to British health cutbacks, was not diagnosed in time to save him from dying a long, painful death. At one point, Rolo lets loose with a scream of uncomprehending rage that must be one of the most chilling moments in music.

"One minute I was in a flashy recording studio, and the next minute in the hospital by this dying man, and I couldn't really handle it. I had this work to do. I got to the studio, after driving straight from the hospital. I had the lyrics to the song in my hand, and something else came out of my mouth; that came out of my mouth. I had never even thought about it, written it, rehearsed it, or anything."

It...just...came...out. That was pretty chilling to go through. That's never happened to me since.

"For me, that's the most loaded song I've ever written. For some people, it could have gone on to say more, but I don't think it needed to. I think it expressed what I felt I had to express, but I didn't really think I was going to do it. Andy Partridge(of XTC), who was recording us at the time, refused when I told him to wipe the tape."

"Literally minutes after I recorded it, I was mad. I went running out into the garden of the studio and I was a very violent, very crazy, very fucked up young guy, and I did a lot of damage... I just had enough."

"I sort of felt as if somebody was speaking through me at that particular point in time... And a little bit later the person who the song was about died and I suddenly realized that it would be sacrilegious for me to be repeating that song every night as part of a set list."

That night, at the El Mocambo gig, the band did 'Steady, Steady' as part of their encore. Stretched out to more than twice the length of the recorded version, Rolo leaned over the edge of the stage and chanted the song into the faces of the audience. Behind him, the band produced the kind of howls, squeals and shrieks from their instruments that would do any doom & gloom band proud. As the song ended, the band charged into an uptempo number, then left the stage.

Pop music at its best is a few minutes of twee melody that seems, when you're caught in the middle of it, more real than your own mundane day-to-day. 'Steady, Steady,' among the best of what the Woodentops do, is a few minutes of the most intense emotion that you will ever feel. It's as good for me as the Four Tops doing 'Reach Out.'

"I'm sorry we didn't do your favorite song that well," Rolo tells me backstage. I didn't want to tell him that 'Steady, Steady' is probably not my favorite Woodentops song, but that's fine.





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*Sticks & Stones*, L'Etranger's third record—and soon to be the first Andy Cash record. Initially released as an indie album full of quirky, pertinent hard-edged music, it will soon be remarketed by Fringe Records under the Andy Cash name. That makes sense, too, because Cash is the songwriter and it's the songs that carry home the message. Andy, like some 15,000 other Canadian songwriters, composers and music publishers, is a member of CAPAC.

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# CAMPUS COUNTDOWN

THE WEB Alternative Radio Top 60 information is based on playlists from reporting Canadian campus radio stations. Statistics are compiled from point totals tabulated on playlist positions of artists, then multiplied by station classification factor. ■ denotes Canadian record ● denotes rapid chart movement

Dec. 4	2 weeks ago	4 weeks ago	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL	PEAK	WEEKS ON
1	2	6	■ VARIOUS	It Came From Canada Vol II	—Og	1	10
2	1	4	BILLY BRAGG	Talking with The Taxman About Poetry	—Polygram	1	8
3	3	2	■ GRUESOMES	Tyrants of Teen Trash	—Og	2	8
4	5	21	■ SHEEP LOOK UP	Sheep Look Up	—Slur	4	10
5	4	14	■ COWBOY JUNKIES	Whites off Earth Now	—Latent	4	6
6	6	3	TALKING HEADS	True Stories	—WEA	3	6
7	8	1	REM	Life's Rich Pagent	—IRS/MCA	1	12
8	7	5	■ SKINNY PUPPY	Mind: The Perpetual Intercourse	—Nettwerk	5	6
9	9	—	● LOVE & ROCKETS	Kundalini Express	—Polygram	9	2
10	18	—	● RAY CONDO & HIS HARD ROCK GONERS	Crazy Date	—Pipeline	10	2
11	33	—	● PARTS FOUND IN SEA	Can See The Forest	—Between	11	2
12	22	19	■ DISSAPOINTED A FEW PEOPLE	Dead In Love	—Psyche Industry	12	4
13	15	23	IGGY POP	Blah Blah Blah	—A&M	13	4
14	11	7	■ L'ETRANGER	Sticks & Stones	—L'Etranger	3	12
15	10	20	HUNTERS & COLLECTORS	Human Frailty	—MCA	10	6
16	12	8	■ 54-40	54-40	—WEA	2	18
17	13	17	NICK CAVE	Kicking Against The Pricks	—Homestead	7	10
18	16	43	SPIRIT OF THE WEST	Tripping Up the Stairs	—Stoney Plain	16	6
19	19	37	■ SUFFER MACHINE	Deprogramme	—Burning Buffalo	19	4
20	25	—	FISHBONE	In Your Face	—CBS	20	2
21	14	10	ELVIS COSTELLO & THE ATTRACTIONS	Blood & Chocolate	—CBS	10	6
22	31	—	■ DEJA VOODOO	Swamp of Love	—Og	22	2
23	17	11	■ FIFTH COLUMN	To Sir With Hate	—Hide	5	8
24	20	—	LILLIAN ALLEN	Revolutionary Tea Party	—Verse to Vinyl	20	4
25	21	—	NEW ORDER	Brotherhood	—Polygram	21	2
26	39	—	JASON & THE SCORCHERS	Still Standing	—Capital	26	2
27	23	13	■ COTTAGE INDUSTRY	The Winters Tale	—Polution	8	8
28	24	16	WOODENTOPS	Giant	—CBS	16	10
29	49	—	■ VITAL SINES	Big Dark Dreams	—Fringe	29	2
30	27	49	TIMBUK 3	Greetings From Timbuk 3	—MCA	27	4
31	34	28	■ PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS	I'm An Adult Now	—P.O.H.	28	6
32	26	12	JAZZ BUTCHER	Bloody Nonsense	—Polygram	2	16
33	30	53	SHREIKBACK	Big Night Music	—Island	30	4
34	32	—	RESIDENTS	Stars & Hank Forever	—Ralph	32	2
35	35	—	BIG AUDIO DYNAMITE	No. 10 Upping St.	—CBS	35	2
36	29	—	FALL	Bend Sinister	—Beggars Banquet	29	2
37	—	—	DIED PRETTY	Free Dirt	—What Goes On	37	—
38	36	—	■ SHUFFLE DEMONS	Streetniks	—Stubby	36	2
39	—	—	■ HERALD NIX	The Fugitive Kind	—East Side	39	—
40	—	—	■ ROLAND BLINN	Tense	—Nerve	40	—
41	40	41	EASTERHOUSE	Contenders	—CBS	40	4
42	37	—	SMITHEREENS	Hand Of Glory	—Capital	37	2
43	41	—	GENERAL PUBLIC	Hand To Mouth	—IRS	41	2
44	43	—	■ SHADOWEY MEN ON A SHADOWY PLANET	Wow Flutter Hiss '86	—Jet Pac	43	2
45	—	—	VERLAINES	Doomsday	—Flying Nun	45	—
46	—	—	VOLCANO SUNS	All Night Lotus Party	—Homestead	46	—
47	45	35	■ CHAIN OF FUN	Chain of Fun	—C.O.F.	35	8
48	—	—	■ CEEDEES	Ceedees	—Freedom	48	—
49	48	—	SMITHS	The Queen Is Dead	—WEA	48	2
50	—	—	FLAMING LIPS	Hear It Is	—Emema	50	—
51	59	22	PAUL SIMON	Graceland	—WEA	16	6
52	54	—	■ SPOONS	Bridges Over Borders	—Capital	52	2
53	44	45	■ SHOCK CULTURE	Shock Culture	—Gryphon	37	6
54	—	—	SMERSH	The Part of the Animal that People Eat	—Red Rhino	54	—
55	55	33	B-52s	Bouncing Off the Satallites	—WEA	32	6
56	—	—	STRANGLERS	Dreamtime	—CBS	56	—
57	28	—	MILES DAVIS	Tutu	—WEA	57	2
58	—	—	FETCHIN BONES	Bad Pumpkin	—Capital	58	—
59	—	59	■ DUNDRELLS	Nothing on T.V.	—Nasty	22	8
60	56	60	BEAT HAPPENING	Beat Happening	—K-US	40	6

## C.B.C. LATE NIGHT

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LOVE & ROCKETS  
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STRANGLERS  
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### Zoogz Rift Island Of The Living Puke SST Import

"Oh fuck," says the petulant voice that introduces this record. "Not another god-damn Zoogz Rift album!"

Apparently there really are lots of other Zoogz Rift albums, but you probably haven't heard them. Neither have I. In fact, Zoogz once had the distinction of being the only person I'd never heard of to have a record chosen as *Spin's* Platter du Jour (last year's *Interim Resurgence*). Having heard *Island of Living Puke*, I'd gladly spend a week there in exchange for a copy of *Interim* or one of Rift's earlier works, which bear such promising titles *Music Sucks* and *Can You Smell My Genitals from Where You're Standing?*

This record is what used to be called a "concept album." It deals with the tribulations Zoogz undergoes after a safe falls 13 storeys onto his head and he wakes up in the titular locale, where the Citizens of the Neighborhood (aka the Mo-Fo's) "bombard him with JUNK MAIL, SPIRITUAL LECTURES, ADVICE, FANTASTIC OFFERS ON FOOD & DRY GOODS and promises of GREAT TIMES AHEAD." Needless to say, Zoogz wants nothing to do with this shit.

Musically, the most obvious influence on Zoogz and his Amazing Shitheads is Captain Beefheart (to whom an earlier Zoogz record was dedicated), though at times there are suggestions of Karleinz Stockhausen, Lou Reed, early Devo, the Residents, Frank Zappa, and even Steely Dan. Beefheart also clearly inspired Zoogz's deranged way with words, but Mr. Rift has a dirtier, more violent mind; in "Shiver Me Timbers," a seafarer's tale that recalls (lyrically) Beefheart's "Orange Claw Hammer," Captain Zoogz Highliner bellows, "I poured a healthy supply of tobacco and gunpowder into me deflated eye enclosure & stuck me head into me blazin' fireplace causing me cranium t'blow up...Smoke escaped from my eye socket which by now was about the size of a fist 'n' me head was fist-fucked by a homosexual sea captain...He just wanted t'sample me pipe tobacco..."

Zoogz also has a penchant for cosmodemonic locker-room humour. In the middle of "A Very Pretty Song for a Very Special Lady," which thus far seems to be exactly that, we hear a girl in the throes of sexual ecstasy wax metaphysical about being taken "beyond the confines of my perceived celestial boundaries..." and so on. To which Zoogz replies, "Blow me, bitch!" Sure it's sexist, but you have to put these aberrations in context: "It's the island of living puke, you asshole!"

Tim Powis



### The Fall Bend Sinister Beggars Banquet/Polygram

There are those who would consider the Fall required reading. Certainly, there's no more academically sound group in the decidedly non-academic field of rock and roll. Carrying on his articulate heckling from the fringes of rock for almost a decade now, Mark E. Smith is in the unenviable position of tenured scholar now. His group's last three records have been released here, and Smith has to deal with accusations of softening the band's rusty-coathangers-in-a-potato-sack sound. To what particular end, I couldn't tell you, but I was taken aback to hear last year's "college radio hit" "Cruiser's Creek" booming out in the young person's department of Simpson's some weeks back.

Personally, I enjoy the Fall's new-found "musical sophistication." *Bend Sinister's* opening track, "R.O.D.", with its rolling rhythm and deep-as-butter texture, is as *seductive* an introduction to a record as I've heard all year, drawing as it does on the same atmosphere as "Riders On The Storm." I mean *seductive*, of course, with reservations. Even with cover girl Brix in the band, the Fall are hardly a "sexy" band. Pelvis appeal is not where Smith is coming from, hence, perhaps, the collegiate overtones. There's more of the big, hairy pullover than the tight cashmere sweater to The Fall.

Until recently, the Fall's musical roots have always been firmly in sixties garage rock, splintered and abused, and even rockabilly, albeit stripped of its sexuality and boozy virtuosity on their essential *Grotesque*. The closest thing to the garage here is "Mr. Pharmacist," which echoes the Standells' "Dirty Water." (The hollered intro is similar to a much more surprising tune—Run D.M.C.'s "My Adidas". But this is a spurious observation, as the Fall could be one of the *whitest* bands around.)

As a footnote, what emerges most strongly on *Bend Sinister* is Smith's obsession with mediaevalism. References to peasants have cropped up on albums for years, and here we have Smith referring to Domesday, knighthood, and Faust, through



murky, motion picture moor sound-track music. The image of Smith as Court Jester is an amusing one: slouching grimly in front of the feasting table, shaking his bells and barking out in monotone, "Verily, it's like armour. Hooves and templates. King Richard's mistake, the Magna Carta. Better Manchester than Nottingham's dank and useless cup squabble." Leaning against his mike stand today, he fulfills the same function—no one quite knows what he's talking about.

What could be wrong about *Bend Sinister* is the closed references Smith opts for. Always carping and bitching, taking on everyone from record execs to the Kane Gang in the past, Smith is now allowing his grating, sneering voice to become just part of the music. "Beer, cigarettes, whiskey. Welcome to the U.S. 80s-90s" That's the one and only example on *Bend Sinister* of Smith's once cryptic social criticism.

This could be the Fall's great mistake—self-reflexism to the exclusion of a context. Of course, this could be the Fall's leap of faith as well. The Fall as a band that plays *music*. Wotta concept.

Term papers are due Monday.  
Rick McGinnis

### The Police Every Breath You Take; The Singles A&M

It's not easy working out just why The Police irritate, and why this album in particular should turn that irritation to loathing. After all, they are not unattractive, not unintelligent, not unskillful.

Perhaps I should mention that this prejudice may be rooted in personal failure. In the summer of 1978, I was bent over a toilet bowl disposing of a quantity of immature (but decidedly assertive) homebrew. The Police's first hit single was playing at the party, and each final effort of my own was matched by that interminable refrain: Roxanne... Roxanne... Roxanne.

Perhaps it is Sting's intellectualism (and the word should be secured by a pair of hefty quotation marks) that annoys. It appears first in "Don't Stand So Close," with a self-conscious remark about Nabakov. That Sting should find himself singing this during middle age and

under a barrage of pre-pubertal knickers is no doubt an irony that escapes him. Three years later (via Jung, Koestler and The Iliad), we reach the dizzy mythological heights of "Wrapped Around Your Finger." "caught between the Scylla and Charibdes." I suppose it sounds better than "caught in the zipper."

What this album finally reinforces is The Police's calculated grasp of their market. They cruised in on the tail-end of punk, capturing a teen market of bandwagoners. The A&R dept. provided the fancy dress and the band dyed their hair. They dutifully posed with their fingers up their noses, except Sting, for whom one can never imagine nasal hygiene being an issue.

The songs displayed a carefully contrived pull on their audience: "Roxanne" has a prostitute, but also the promise of domestic security: naughty but nice. "Don't Stand So Close," basically says to the children in the audience, "I like you." But "Every Breath You Take" is the most interesting.

At the time, Sting was being divorced by his wife, due to his bond-breaking activities. At the height of his compositional powers, he was able to transform the experience of his infidelity into the accusing and deserted narrative of the song. As he wormed his way into the nations consciousness as the abused party, he is, in this song, guilty of the same sort of sanctimonious vanity that once made a multi-millionaire property magnate write: "Imagine no possessions."

The boys like them, so do the girls, so do musicians and songwriters. This blanket catering to taste only serves to remind that the Police have never challenged. It is significant that "Invisible Sun"—their one song without overt love-interest—bombed, and was followed by the rush release of "Every Little Thing She Does Is Magic." Of course, pop songs don't have to be deep and brainy and political, but they should at least be inspiring. I take that back; all they have to be is popular. Please buy this brilliant album.

Philip Martin

### Deja Voodoo Swamp Of Love (Og Music)

This duo—one tall and ugly, the other less tall but uglier—make sandwiches for the inhabitants of Montreal. I personally wouldn't go near one of these sandwiches. The impression I get from their cruel mutilation of rock'n'roll is that they would think nothing of padding out the tuna salad with some finely chopped newt, or some horrible gloop freshly scraped off the inside of the cistern.

But at least they're not discriminatory about their art. They'll gladly botch up any tune, and every riff. By now it's clear that Voodoo have 'found their niche' in the rich and fulfilling world of Canadian rock, while even fatter times lie ahead with Gerard's recent discovery of a new guitar chord—his fourth, I believe. And Voodoo should get an all-expenses paid trip to the murky bog of their choice for the work they've done with Og Records (the *It Came From Canada* series of fine phonograph records), and a Voodoo tribute band is in the works (although they can't decide on 'The Stuff' or 'The Things'), but but but but....

This is not the best Deja Voodoo album. But it's a Deja Voodoo album. Sniff on that for a while, then call me back.

Dave Rave

### The Dave Howard Singers Rock On E.P. Pinnacle Import

No sour grapes but Dave and his Singers are getting awfully predictable and, well, b-o-r-i-n-g. And that's criminal, because Dave has ten times the brains in his head to settle for the mud he's releasing in England. The shaky irony bridging his crazed organ & drum-box 'punk rock' and his unsettling, melodramatic lounge lizard schtick is beginning to sound like the bad idea it was in the first place...and boy, was it great.

Dave's problem is that he always took into account *everything* that people told him about his music, his 'intellectual psychotic' image, his dubious sexuality, and he has become a product of bad advice. Nine out of the twelve songs he has recorded for the British public attest to this. Two minute's worth of 'Rock On' is one of the three good ideas he's had in as many years. But when a musician of Dave Howard's calibre finds it necessary to draw attention to his genitals as stupidly as he does on 'Rock On,' and when a song's chorus invites us to "kill the fatted whore back in Labrador," you know it's only a matter of time before that legendary Acetone (featured on the cover of this disc) gets pawned in for a one-way ticket back to Queen Street's illustrious dives.

Prove me wrong, Dave. Get your finger out.  
Dave Rave

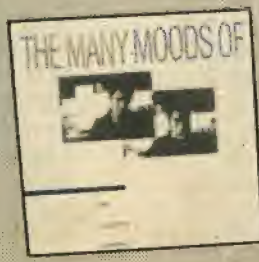
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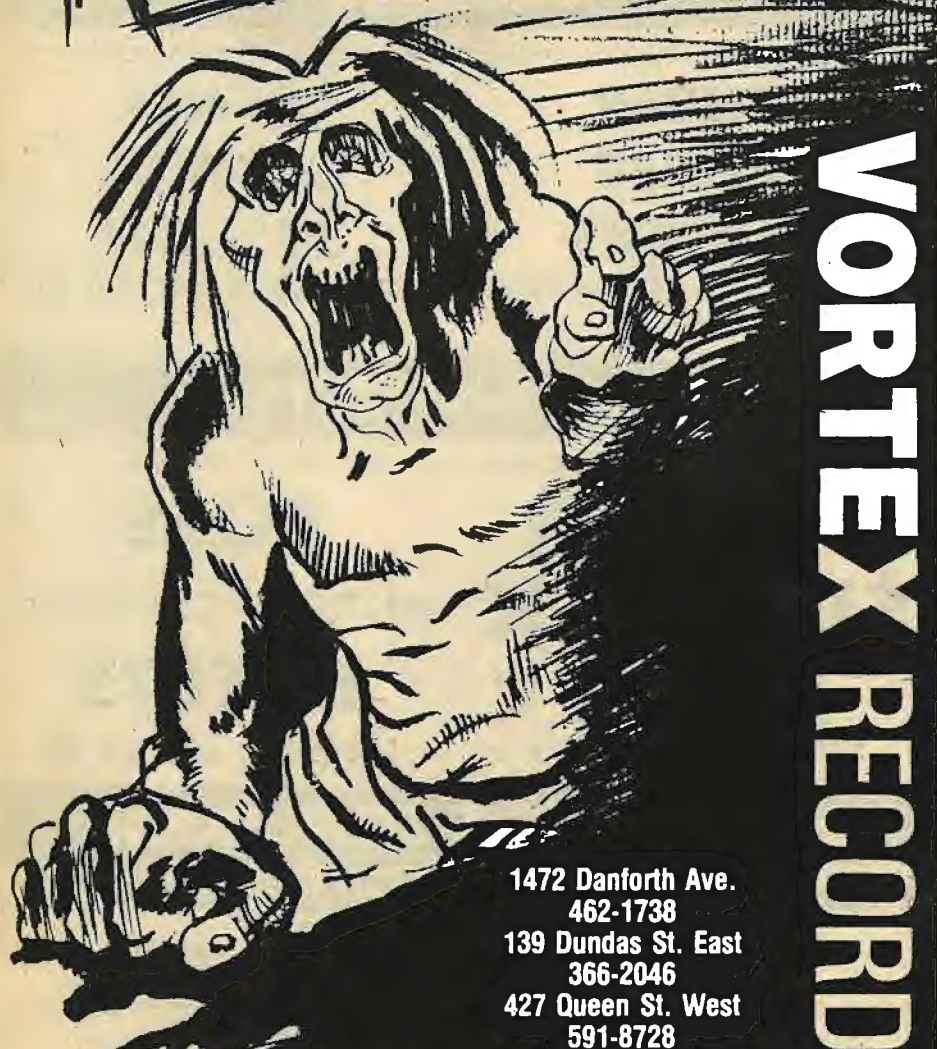
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LUCY SHOW: Brigitte Cavanagh

**The Bolshoi**  
*Friends—Beggars' Banquet*  
**The Lucy Show**  
*Mania—Big Time/Mercury*

Dread grips the soul even as The Bolshoi's *Friends* makes its first appearance. Bolshoi means 'great' or something like that in Russian, and the gormless pseudo-Nordic lettering is an even clearer indication of the dubious delights to come. And then there's this doinkless heavy metal album cover. Ye gods! Have we learned nothing?

But the clincher is the record itself, of course, and thoroughly dislikeable it is. Mewling smugness drips from every cut in the practised sneer that Trevor Tanner uses for a voice. The music lopes about aimlessly as every song outlasts whatever initial interest it had. This is a very standard sort of rock noodling not at all aided by the addition of corp-o-rock guitar riffs and irrelevant studio gimmickry. Lyrical content is

either overly familiar or stupidly unpleasant. This record is not incompetent so much as merely pointless.

The Lucy Show's *Mania* is a much happier experience. The core of this band is a pair of transplanted Canadians working in England, Ron Vandeven and Mark Bandola. They seem to share a passion for murky psychedelia and quasi-pop songwriting. This makes them sound a little like the JMC with a much less aggressive attitude and no feedback.

This is an uneven if generally satisfying record with at least three gems, all of them apparently sincere love songs. The best, 'Sad September,' has a young man declare, "I need your warmth," without sounding either sappy or creepy. A record chock-a-block with swooning romanticism, inarticulate yearning and groovy fuzzy guitars is nothing to sniff at in these dark days.

Phillip Bull

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*Get Close*  
WEA

Especially since the consolidating success of *Learning to Crawl*, Chrissie Hynde commands the kind of respect afforded to few women in her line of work. Like a less arcane Kate Bush, her leisurely delivery of a solid, polished album every couple of years arouses an effluvia of superlatives, such artistic independence... those gut-wrenching lyrics... that voice... wotta performer.

"Fuck you," replies Hynde's music. But she's much more than a Tough Bitch. Rather, her music issues forth into the altogether uninviting context of rock music, a uniquely feminine viewpoint.

That female perspective is distinctly, though never tiresomely, *womanist*. Like Annie Lennox, Hynde's form of seduction rejects the Penelopean variety of traditional femininity. It's the pure sexuality that, sweeping issues of gender aside, surges from any sensual performer, be it Elvis or Tina Turner. This is rock'n'roll—American style. And as Hynde firmly stated long ago, "I'm special." Moreover, she asserts that brash individualism in the package deal: songwriting skills, a truly original voice, stage charisma—a potent (and rare) situation when it belongs to (and is controlled by) an equally powerful woman.

The Pretenders have constructed a rock hard reputation from a couple of excellent albums and a mediocre third album. The stunning popcraft of 'Brass in Pocket,' 'Talk of the Town,' and 'Message of Love' only dimly effluoresced on *Learning to Crawl*'s best songs, like 'Show Me' and 'Back on the Chain Gang.'

Consider biographical details? Forget it: the sentimentality behind media eulogies and the systematic deification of the Hynde woman's personal strength has reached embarrassing proportions. Besides, the sub-text of The Pretenders Story has always been "Led by Chrissie Hynde."

She exercises some of that artistic autocracy on *Get Close*. Martin Chambers, the only other original (and living) member, makes only a brief appearance. Otherwise, some expensive hired help and high-powered production help make this an uneven album. And a predictable one.

There's no bite! No kick! No edge! Insert your own euphemism. For the sad fact is that the woman who once urged to "do it on the pavement," now exclaims, "who can explain the thunder and rain/there's something in the air." Sounds like Rolf and Lisle singing in the von Trapp gazebo. Herein lies the problem. What makes '3000 Miles' so charming (apart from the conjured scene of Chrissie and Natalie waiting with egg nog for daddy Ray) becomes regrettably insipid when that sentiment strains through too many songs.

In fact (brace your copy of *Pretenders II*), there are actually a few terrible songs. Neither 'Dance' nor 'How Much Did You Get For Your Soul' capitalize on Hynde's voice but insist on lamely funk along a lost rhythm track. That she's disparaging the Jackson endorsement empire is one thing; a bad song is another.

Keyboard embellishments which marred earlier tunes like 'Space Invader' also stain this album. 'Light of the Moon,' the choicest slice of AM tripe (virtually begging a Pat Benatar cover), even rips off the synth intro of 'Don't You.' I couldn't believe it, either.

The good stuff? The record company tip sheet mentions the 'snappy' single 'Don't Get Me Wrong.' Even after numerous hearings it does, indeed, snap rather well. Not only the merits of "rocking hard" but also the afflictions of those maturing sensibilities of aging pop musicians should be noted. Signalled by 'Middle of the Road,' the end of the fuckism in songs like 'Precious' is clearly nigh.

But it's a graceful decline in which Hynde emerges well-worn but well-won. 'My Baby,' though it gets awfully self-reflexive ("If there's a method to writing a song/how come I'm getting it wrong?"), and 'Chill Factor,' a kind of sequel in the feminist sentiment of 'Thin Line Between Love and Hate,' rock rather nicely, thank you.

These observations notwithstanding, the rock truism remains that an uneven Pretenders album is, in a generic context, still a good one. "What the fuck," said the young Chrissie. Because, says Hynde now, "I'm happy." Embossing that much abused seal of maternal and marital domesticity, this album is Hynde's personal endorsement of long-grain rice.

Helen Lee

400 PM



# SST

• America's top 'alternative' record lable SST releases a batch of new albums this month. Around here, that's a big deal. Veteran punk rockers Rick McGinnis, Tim Powis and Phillip Dellio get the goods from PO Box 1, Lawndale, Calif.

When SST started operation six years ago, most people expected nothing short of the ultimate hardcore label. Today, in the year when hardcore has found itself dissolving in the midst of fortunate musical diversity, and unfortunate apathy (leaving us...speedcore?), SST is still kicking, and producing a startling array of releases, many of which have nothing to do with hardcore. While I don't love everything that comes out of Lawndale, I almost regard SST as a musical education. I'd take out a subscription, if it came to that. What can I say? That the most exciting thing in American music right now still has a connection with Black Flag? Scary thought, but true.

## Slovenly Thinking of Empire

This is a record that, like Van Morrison's *Astral Weeks*, like much of the Fall, like Marvin Gaye's *Let's Get It On* and *What's Going On*, could be put on a continuous tape, and left to play while you go out, do some laundry, pick up some bagels, come back, remember the laundry, come back; paying attention to the music now and then, perking up at certain moments, relaxing into inattention at others.

While not as good as the records that I've compared it to, I still think it's pretty brilliant. Slovenly's songs have precious little to do with pop music, either in structure or sentiment. One of the band's three guitarists will keep noodling on while singer Steve Anderson (who sounds like Ian Curtis) drones and intones over and under the whole thing. I don't know how they keep it together—these songs make about as much architectural sense as some things I hear in Coltrane, but the effect is quite...pleasant? Maybe that's the best word, as Slovenly aren't in the business of jarring on *Thinking of Empire*.

The lyric sheet is pretty useless, or at least a let-down. Content to let Anderson let the verbiage fly, an occasional phrase dropping quite nicely off the palate, a perusal of the lyric sheet hips me to barely more than collegiate poetry for Sylvia Plath groupies. But quibbles aside, I can see myself digging Slovenly quite a lot. Do they have a t-shirt?

R.M.

## Gone Gone II, But Never Too Gone

Gone is what Greg Ginn, Black Flag's guitarist, is doing on his holiday from Henry Rollins. It's a three-man, all-instrumental band. Unlike the instrumental stuff Ginn has recorded with Flag, Gone's music is tightly structured. There are 16 cuts on *Gone II*, so there isn't time to get too Gone on any one of 'em, but there's still time to get pretty gone if you get directly to the point, which Gone does.

No flaccid noodling here! Ginn, bassist Andrew Weiss and drummer Simeon Caine singlemindedly hammer out riff upon riff, with Ginn's guitar spinning off the hard core for the odd improvisational outing (often these solos are overdubbed so Ginn can keep riff-raffing with the boys underneath). Despite the talk about how Gone reflects Ginn's fascination with John Coltrane, and word-dropping by SST that includes "har-molodic," this music sounds more like hip heavy metal. What makes it hip are the abrupt rhythmic charge-ups, the lopsided structures between those charge-ups, and the tonal ambiguity of Ginn's frantic guitar solos, which can sound willfully directionless at first hearing, but acquire coherence and cogency as the whole overbearing sonic slab gets easier to swallow. But now that Gone has proved over two albums that it can punch out such concise little nuggets of controlled fury, it's time for the band to get real, real gone for a change.

T.P.

## Bad Brains I Against I

Weird record. Back in '82, the Brains came up with one of hardcore's essential anthems in 'Rock For Light.' Expecting more of the same, I was initially thrown by how subdued the band has become, following a four-year layoff. A couple of plays, though, and a weary integrity comes through. The fractured song structures are still around, and the primary concern is still spiritual confrontation with oppression. Standout track and prototypical of the new sound: "Sacred Love," with H.R.'s vocal recorded over the phone from a jail cell, where he was serving time for a fabricated drug charge.

P.D.

## SWA Sex Doctor

Like any label with a clearly defined image and a pre-sold buyership—from Motown through Philly International through Factory—SST dumps its fair share of formulaic garbage into the market. SWA is definitively representative of SST at its most expedient: loud, directionless playing; vague psycho-sexual underpinnings; dreadful lyrics ("Feeling the pain/living in hell/trying to stop/this burning carousel"). For good measure, ex-Black Flag player Chuck Dukowski is on hand—seems like 75% of the SST catalogue has some affiliation with the Flag. If this were on a major label, it would be laughed at; there's no reason to do otherwise, just because SST is stamped on the spine.

P.D.



## The Leaving Trains Kill Tunes

Over a year ago, Tom Waits told an interviewer that Falling James and The Leaving Trains were one of his favorite bands. Was I excited when I picked up this record? Was I let down when I listened to it? Guilty on both accounts.

I don't know about Tom, but I can't see that The Leaving Trains have much to offer, either as an extreme musical experience, or as a conventional rawk'n'roll time-waster. After a promising start with 'Light Rain,' a fine example of air guitar pop, the whole affair simply bogs down in dull tune after dull tune sounding like a Clash tribute band ("Live at the Gasworks: London Calling, a tribute to the Clash. No cover.") with a lead singer that'd rather be playing Lenny Kaye in a Patti Smith cover band ("Live at the Gasworks: Piss Factory"). Things perk up for a moment on something called 'A Drunker Version of You,' until I think, yeah, Doug and The Slugs could do a great cover of this.

R.M.

## Angst Mending Wall

With a name like Angst and a label like SST, you might expect this to be a hot-headed thrash band. Of course, with an opening sentence like that you know they're not. Angst is a trio that graduated with honours from the All-American school of wasted, world-weary garage mechanics whose alumni also include the Velvet Underground, Dream Syndicate, perhaps Neil Young circa *Tonight's The Night*.

The guitar on *Mending Wall* is torn and frayed, slightly out of tune and cheaply amplified. The singers either warble together in loose harmony or use the kind of burnt-out, half-spoken drawl of resignation that surfaces after you drink eight beers to take the edge off coming down from a week-long speed run that you embarked on because your girlfriend left you after trying to kill herself because you'd been drinking too much after the last speed run and tried to beat her up when you found out she was cheating on you because you couldn't get it up from doing too much speed.

T.P.



# SILVER CROWN

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**T**he structural dynamics of my pants are a lot simpler than they actually appear to be. You've seen them in your favourite 7-11 convenience stores. It's just that they're about this big before you put them on, and you passed them up because they're in the gum section next to the Hubba Bubba."

If this strikes you as a frivolous quote with which to open an article on an artist of David Lee Roth's stature, reconsider. The structural dynamics of Diamond Dave's pants may well be his most precious asset; the thin, semi-permeable spandex membrane that displays his better half and also keeps it under wraps. Dave's been a puppet, a poet, a pirate, a pauper (although not in recent memory); now he's a king with his crown jewels on display but well-protected.

And here he is, true to his regal status, holding court (at a press conference) in full party monarch regalia, always ready to play the role of his own jester. The cameras click, the platinum record is presented, but before the questions begin Dave delivers his throne speech.

"So who would've thought, huh? Who would've figured? How many times have we seen the lead singer leave the big rock band, y'know, and we never bothered with him again?" After several

minutes of describing the hard fought battle to reclaim his kingdom after parting company with Van Halen at its commercial peak, Dave wraps up his rap with a heartfelt, optimistic acknowledgement of the fifth estate: "I got a beautiful band, man, and I got a real great future. And I gotta thank you for helpin' me out with that. It ain't no fuckin' good without an audience."

The journalistic mass applaud. Seriously.

It's Hallowe'en, so many in the audience at Maple Leaf Gardens have no qualms about attending the second coming of North America's Number One Party Guy in *Eat 'Em and Smile* warpaint. Heck, they'd probably do it anyway. These are party people. And besides, as Dashing Dave said that very afternoon when asked what Hallowe'en means to him: "You gotta be a beginner if you're waiting 'til Hallowe'en!" That's right, boys 'n' berries, Big Daddy Roth is on the trick-or-treating trail three hundred and sixty fuckin' five days a year!

Tonight is more than a mere concert. It's the first time David Lee's been to town since the last Van Halen show. It's time to make a pledge of allegiance.

"When I shook Edward Van Halen's hand over a year ago," recalls the man whose tour bus reads SHOWUSYRTITS where the destination is normally indicated, "we both shed a tear and said, just like any other band we're having a musical difference and we're gonna go

our own way. And we cried and hugged and split and two weeks later I'm reading in *Rolling Stone* what an asshole I am, and how poor little Eddie was forced to live the last 12 years of his life living a lie.

"I still believe it's not necessary to make a choice, but Van Halen demands it. Well, I'll rise to the challenge. If we have to make a comparison, then fine. I eat you for breakfast, pal! And I eat you and smile!"

Well, alright! And several David Lee devotees have also risen to the challenge at the Gardens, making a pre-show circuit of the floor carrying a big white bed sheet painted with red letters that read "FUCK SAMMY HAGAR" (who, in case you've been vacationing on Pluto, or are simply some kinda pencil-necked Lionel Richie fan, replaced DLR in VH, OK?).

The show got under way with 'Shy Boy,' Dave's ironically titled theme song. The band sounds Halen hearty, cuz they're here to party, and a short way into the set Roth engages in a couple of minutes of suggestive repartee with the front rows. It culminates with an admonition: "Don't stick your tongue out at me unless you plan to use it, baby!"

Our Sly Boy knows how to excite a crowd in the time-honoured, give-yourselves-a-hand Vegas tradition. He effortlessly convinces his subjects that this is IT, the night of nights. Little reassurances such as, "I'd like to take you guys to Europe with me!" or "We're shootin' our next video here tonight!" are greeted with upraised fists and unanimous howls of gullible glee.

"How many rock'n'rollers say, 'Oh yeah, man, I get all my energy from the crowd?'" Dave rhetorically asks the press earlier the same day. "They come off a bad show and say it was a flat crowd. Well, fuck you, here's half the ticket money, too! No way. I'll set the fire. Here's my little Junior Miss Flame Thrower!"

The J.M.F.T. is also known as Steve Vai, Dangerous Dave's secret weapon. He's the skinny puppy whose job it is to be out-wailin' Eddie Van Halen. Roth may have more charisma than a Winnebago load of Sammy Hagars, but it don't mean a thing without a serious contender on all six strings. And Vai (who also turned in a monstrous performance on PIL's *Album* this year) is more than up to the job. He's so fast, so unremittingly virtuosic, so well-versed in "hammering-on" and other state-of-the-art guitar shenanigans, you feel like telling him to lighten up, that it's all right—he passed the audition.

Vai gets into a lengthy battle of chops with equally awesome bassist Billy Sheeham, and has a long-distance conversation with his boss about what a bit-chin' burg T.O. is. Dave disappears. The band plays on. Dave reappears on an elevated platform at the far end of the rink, just in front of the mixing board. "Steeeevie!" he calls out. "Yes Dave," answers Vai—on his guitar, of course. "Can you say...Toronto kicks ass?" Darned if he can't. At Dashing Dave's behest, Stevie also comments on the quality of Toronto's chicks and a few other matters of local pride.

What makes Dave so hard to dislike is he's not afraid to make a bit of a dork of himself (Toronto kicks ass. Come on!). The David Lee Roth the public gets might not have much depth of character, but the exposed surface is a fairly complex interplay between his cocky rock'n'roll stud posturing and a self-mocking alter ego who looks at himself, then turns to the crowd and winks knowingly as if to say, "Too much, huh?" But he doesn't want people to laugh too hard.

"Making this music is storm and thunder, *sturm und drang* by the gallon, babe. So you gotta balance it out somewhat. If you play with too much pain, it's painful to watch. But if you yuk it up, what kinda hero is that? We have joke bands: I love Fishbone, but that's not rock'n'roll to me. Rock'n'roll is good solid balance. And a lot of times poeple don't take me serious because I'm quick to point the finger. I point it in the mirror just as readily as pointing it at one of the characters in the videos or somebody in the industry."

Blown up to showbiz proportions, Dave's carefree self-consciousness becomes careful image-consciousness. At the Gardens, photographers are only permitted to take pix during the first three songs. "Now we gotta look our best, man, cuz we're just comin' through the door," explains Dapper Dave.

It should come as no surprise that one of the last books Roth read was *In Search of Excellence*. Needless to say, for Dave, the search is over. He just wants to see how the other chumps figure on getting there. So who did he look up to on his hyperbolic course to the summit?

"Obviously the Beatles, Elvis, Zep-pelin. But what about the guy who invented McDonald's? Essentially that's pure-rock. Here's a guy who had a burger and everybody told him, that's nothin' but a burger. In fact, it's smaller than everybody else's. He went on and on and pretty soon he's Led Zeppelin. What's the difference?"

Probably plenty if you stop and think really hard about it. But that definitely would not be the rock'n'roll thing to do. Besides, it's a neat conceit: David Lee Roth, the guy who parlayed an undersized patty into a burger kingdom. Over 5 billion served. They ate 'em and smiled.



David and The Man From W.E.A. — King Rick Rock

**T**HIS



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boy 1

### Blue Rodeo Horseshoe

This is Rodeo Village. One street runs through the town; one street washed in fog and rain. Neon signs push out of the gloom: SADDLE, TAVERN, LOVE, HORSE, FIRE, REBEL, BAR. Coming up the way is the other boy and that girl. I can't make out what they say, but they are happy. She's feeding the popcorn and him, well, his boot-heels spark on the tracks. Only one house too, slatted red up to the stars: no door, no trash-can, no nothing except, high up, a window. In the room there is a poster that reads "Boulevard of Broken Dreams," in front of it hangs a bulb with no shade and underneath: Him. Forlorn and abandoned. A cigarette traces and he starts to sing.

This is all very upsetting, I am thinking, when a Rodeo Boy walks over.

"Welcome," he says, "and how do you find us?"

"With difficulty," I reply, remembering the coin I had stopped to pick up, the sidewalk that opened and falling through space.

"It's a simple community we have here, but we think it works." I wonder if it isn't a bit sad and depressing. Rodeo laughs.

"Don't worry, it's not real. Besides, wait for the chord change, things cheer up after that."

He puts his arm around me.

"Come. Get yourself a drink and find out."

So I do. The bar is run by a gap-tooth doxy.

The bill I pay with is a yard long and the beer bottle I get for it comes up to my neck.

"Have you been here long?"

"Not long, no. Can you open this thing?"

"Twist off."

"Thanks."

Then she tells me everything. She explains how the other boy always has the girl and how the girl thinks she is happy with him. How it rains, how God can hear what they say to each other. "Another beer?"

"I think I'm doing fine with this one, in fact, it doesn't seem to have gone down at all."

"They don't. Ever. But I'm supposed to ask."

"Thanks anyway," I laugh.

"Will you kiss me?"

The conviviality of bars, places where people drink. The warm smell, mouths moving in silent conversation, music and indecipherable voices. The glow of liquor hugging your shoulders; it pushes you forward, puts tears in your eyes.

"Please, it's been so long."

Rodeo throws back his head. The beer bottles scream out: "Chord change!"

With that, the black skies split open and a band of sunlight runs up the street. The other boy has vanished, the real one appears. He straightens his collar and she drops the popcorn. In a slow ecstatic embrace they move together, into the haze.

Philip Martin



boy 2 — Peter Beck

### Shriekback Concert Hall

Barry Andrews would love West Hollywood. And Melrose Avenue. On the quivering fringe of insane capitalism, this garish monument to West Coast fetishism sells (of all things) plastic '50s lawn furniture. It's cheap. But expensive to buy. So ridiculously expensive, you never wanted it, anyway.

As it appears, the head Shriek is flirting with commercialism. He even writes on the back cover of the latest *Big Night Music*. "We obviously hope you will buy it voraciously." We, as closet (or front porch) decadent dilettantes who make up the audience of this holy shrine, are tickled to hell by his fragrance.

Wearing at least 30 gold chains and an embroidered harem outfit (it's so out, it's gotta be in, right?), Andrews looks like a

glittering genie on the last carpet to Liberia. For the sell-out crowd, he's as close as you get to a latter-day, latter-punk Buddha of mystic pop. Andrews' arsenal of top-flight musicians, i-D model back-up singers, in-sync choreography, and his own beaming persona, threaten to bust the kiln wide open (air-conditioning, anyone?). Brilliant light, heat, sound: on the brink of collapse you find yourself suddenly yearning for that Lite-Bright you never got in kindergarten.

From the forthcoming compilation LP by various "People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals," they perform their contribution, 'Hanging the Fire.' Like other manic Shriekpieces, it's a frothing, rhythmic blast of barking vocals and positively rabid bass perma-grooves.

Though purposely omitted from the new album, syn-

thesizers prove essential in abetting the live assault and aiding the propulsive energy of earlier songs, especially the zooming intro of 'Everything That Rises Must Converge.'

Shriekback close their Toronto show with a ditty called 'Nemesis'—their late commercial stab in the populist gut. But not to worry, it's only a superficial wound. And a damn fine, stomping dance tune for those who usually and all too placidly abide the parameters of anti-theatrical pop. Is Shriekmusic essentially elitist and, therefore, not commercially viable, at least on a "voraciously" massive scale? They make massive music, right? Damn right. Face it, Mr. Andrews: a Grammy's a long way off. And you never wanted it, anyway.

Helen Lee



Skinny Puppy's Nivec — Steve Ralph

### Skinny Puppy/Severed Heads RPM

This was a matinee for all ages. As I joined the screaming hundreds outside, it was clear that any opinions of mine would be redundant and churlish. I began to understand how Ed Sullivan felt. Jane, a 14 year old from out of town, stood in front of me. Stupidly: did she like them?

"They're brilliant: look."

She rolled back her sleeve to reveal the word NIVEC cut into her arm.

"NIVEC?"

"Yeah, Cevin back to front."

"Of course."

"I did it in math with a compass."

The wound was rubbed in with blue ink, still bleeding. Apart from the genuine stuff, there's a lot of fake blood around (Skinny Puppy encourage audience participation), and from these children I learned of the best blood-shops in town. Joke shops are out when real fans can get pig's blood from Chinatown.

Severed Heads start the afternoon show under the impression that their precise videos can compensate for non-performance. It's like watching TV with the radio on: absorbing enough until you remember the dishes in the sink.

Skinny Puppy are welcomed by cheers and screams, which last for the duration of their set. Talking later to informed journalists, I am told this was a sub-standard performance. They explained the Pup-phenomena with words like "cathartic" and "apocalyptic." I wonder what the 14 year olds would make of that. There was once a Roxy Music magazine which listed the song words against an annotated explanation of their references and cultural sources, which is the same sort of thing as describing this afternoon as "cathartic."

I didn't get Skinny Puppy. They appear derivative and contrived, presenting their European antecedents in an easy-to-grasp, Readers Digest form. But that seemed irrelevant when I bumped into Jane. Stupidly: did you like them? Her face, now completely covered in pig's blood, broke into a grin.

"Brilliant."

Philip Martin



LIVE



Motorhead's Lemmy — Chris Buck

### Gene Loves Jezebel The Copa

Gene: We were up there: the CN Tower.

Jezebel: The biggest phallic symbol in North America!

Gene: Or maybe Toronto just has the biggest Oedipus complex...

Talking of which, for boys who left their teens a decade ago, I loves G need parents to a rather unhealthy degree. They have found them in Canada: their parents are now that disapproving group of faggot-bashers and red-necks, whose conservatism has won the naughty boys a career in staying up late, dressing funny, and talking about sex in public places.

Sex is what they would say they are about: They talk of desire, deliver a cliched version of what is understood to be erotic music and cross-dress with the po-faced conviction of first year drama students. Very naughty, I don't think. This night of "sex-music" at the Copa was a dreary, loveless exercise.

The equation is a simple one: The band inhabit the intersection of a Venn Diagram of influences. Let A equal early Bowie, B, London 1982, and C, Provincial Wackiness. The

### Motorhead Concert Hall

Probably because of my advancing years, my strongest memory of this concert is how loud it was. Chris Buck says it wasn't loud enough. I didn't notice anyone else plugging their ears, so maybe he's right.

My second strongest memory is of Lemmy Kilmister telling off the unknown fuckhead who spat phlegm at him, warning one and all that any more of this and the show would be over, and granting them permission to cripple anyone who got plegmy with Lemmy again. The gobbing stopped.

Lemmy's the only metal masher around who looks, acts, and probably is as tough as his music sounds, which gives Motorhead a credibility

that all the Satan worshippers and Druid dudes will never achieve.

Lemmy's a big biker of a bastard, but he has his mike stand set way up high with the mike dangling down so he looks as though he's raging at the heavens as he sings. His preferred method of playing bass is just to strum chords on it. When I plugged my ears I could actually make out the notes in the two guitar players' solos; without the filtration they tended to get lost in the undifferentiated wall of ker-rang. But you don't go hear Motorhead to discern superfluous details like what notes are being played. You surrender to the noise and leave, deaf forever to the battle's roar.

Tim Powis

mash lacks charm, irony and talent: badness without redeeming features.

Afterwards at the reception, I take a stick of broccoli, dip it in Cheez-Wizz and say to the little pricks, "Was that good for you: are you glad you came?"

The fey voices and mannerisms have gone; they just flirt with homosexuality to give a frisson of sin to their image. Instead I talk to

two businessmen about sales figures, breaking the Prairies and how they think America is ready for them. They are staying at the same hotel as Lionel Ritchie and complain that he gets a better class of groupie. Then it's time to get a good night sleep, (they are doing a live-MTV slot the next day) and with that, the little terrors call it a night.

Phillip Martin

### New Order Massey Hall

The Bodines opened the show with jangling guitars and earnest voices. I liked the sound straight-off, and after six more selections—which would have been indistinguishable had there not been pauses—I still liked it. If there is a fine line between repetition and groovin', the Bodines have shaved it to a hair's breadth.

But like too many young bands they believe that inactivity is, of itself, a style—sort of like Townshend's windmills. I think a band should stand very still only when, as with the Jesus and Mary Chain, they have neither style nor content.

During the intermission I studied the hall's interior—its wrap-around tiers, its compact yet efficient capaciousness—and decided that it is the perfect venue for performers intimate with their audience. But, as the New Order leisurely took their places onstage, I remembered our last encounter and prepared myself for an evening of mutual (rather than musical) exclusivity.

This is a band which controls its own niche in the pop fray; they are many things but they are not intimate. Their's is an act with a chip on its shoulder, an albatross round its neck, and absolutely no sense of humour. Their's is an audience of over-appreciative teenagers and an odd-assortment of adults who spend much of their spare time worrying about death. Who else could be interested in watching manic obsessives who positively crow about their lack of musicianship, their disdain for practise, and their peerless snobbery?

So why go see them? The New Order onstage are as helpless as transients keeping

pace with a freight train. So much of their material relies on IBM roadies and pre-programmed beat tracks, that the little work they actually do is pointless. If anything were to go wrong with the hardware, the software would keep playing in spite of it. Words like 'soul' just don't apply when you take a break for a wardrobe and floppy disc change.

I'm not attacking their music. The New Order's repertoire contains two of pop's catchiest formulaic song types: one structured around chunks of rhythm guitar, the other around a broodingly cadenced synth. Both were inherited from Joy Division (which formed the aforementioned niche) and Ian Curtis (the aforementioned albatross) but the New Order catalysed them into a new pop phenomenon—restless commercialism.

But the contrast between live and recorded is like the separation of Church and State. Their album, *Power, Corruption and Lies* embodied everything that one can love or hate about the New Wave. Dance floors will never be the same after the strident back beat which culminated in the hit single 'Blue Monday/The Beach.' And still the Massey date was yet another disappointment.

As with most self-styled enigmas, the New Order present a fundamental barrier to audience enjoyment. One can be offended by their ambivalence or one can ignore it and listen. But as live performers they provide nothing that their records cannot. They seem to derive no pleasure from the act and, if this is merely 'an act,' it matters little. Either way they are a crashing bore.

Denis-Seguin

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TUES 2- BAUCE (1986) THE MINIMALIST (1986) JUG BANG (1986)

WED 3- BAUCE (1986) IN COMEDY WITHOUT HANDS (1986) MARYLIN BROOKS GUEST (1986)

THURS 4- CLOSED CORPORATION (1986) BILL ZAGET (1986) Performances Cabaret called LOUNGE LIZARDS (1986)

FRI 5- amoeba quiche & RHEO-STATICS (1986)

SAT 6- KIDS IN THE HALL (1986) in big letters (1986) SCOTT MERRITT (1986) AN EVENING WITH TERRY CADE (1986) COWBOY JUNKIES (1986)

DECEMBER 8- 86

21- THE DEVILS (1986)

22- 30- HAPPY HOLIDAYS (1986)

31- START HA-PPY NEW YEAR (1986) SHADOWY MEN ON A SHADOWY PLANET (1986) AND COWBOY JUNKIES (1986)

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Wed 10: T.B.A.  
Thur 11: Mike Adkinson  
Jazz Unit  
Fri 12: October Crisis  
Sat 13: Saddle Tramps  
Sun 14: Shock Culture

Mon 15: The Finks  
Tues 16: Granny's Gums  
Wed 17: Edna & Edna  
Thurs 18: Kitten With A Whip  
Fri 19: Ukase  
Sat 20: Sam F. Haines  
Sun 21: T.B.A.

Mon 22: Boys From Nowhere  
Legend Killer  
Ungone  
Tues 23: Blues Bandits  
Wed 24: 63 Monroe, Doxine  
Sam F. Haines—Jam!  
Thurs 25: closed  
Fri 26: Crawling King Snake  
Sat 27: Faded Films  
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# WHAT'S SHAKIN'

### THURSDAY 4

PHANTOMS: Isabella til Fri  
NATIONAL STEEL: Isabella (Lower)  
PAUL JAMES: Albert's Hall til Sat  
PALACE BLUE, MY PAL HOAGY  
THE THIN LINE: Cabana  
SALUTE TO GEMINI AWARDS: Diamond  
CLOSED CORPORATION: Rivoli til Fri  
CHRIS WHITELEY: Grossman's til Fri  
BUZZ UPSHAW: Pinetree til Sat  
BIG DADDY KINSEY: Clinton's til Sat  
THE IKONS: Cameron  
THE ROMANIAN BROS.: Horseshoe  
JOHN WATERS, LYDIA LUNCH: RPM  
SUN MESSENGERS: Bamboo til Sat  
WHITENOISE: Lee's  
HELEN TERRY, JERMAINE STEWART: Copa  
DEREK ST. HOLMES: R&R Heaven  
63 MONROE, UKASE  
LIFELESS CURRENTS, THOSE DARNED  
BIPEDS: Key West

### FRIDAY 5

L'ETRANGER, CHANGE OF HEART  
SCOTT B: Lee's  
NORTHERN PIKES: Horseshoe til Sat  
WHITENOISE: Cameron  
ROBBIE ROX, KAZZOTTO:  
Isabella til Sat  
D.V.P., CERAFIM: Cabana  
SPOONS: Nag's Head North  
MOONLIGHT DRIVE, FIRE:  
R&R Heaven til Sat  
TULA: Elmo  
WORKPANTS: Key West (Ldn.)

### SATURDAY 6

AMOeba QUICHE, RHEOSTATICS: Rivoli  
RUST (Neil Young): Elmo  
THE LAWN: Cameron  
BLUE RODEO: Lee's  
TRES HOMBRES: Nag's Head North  
NORTHERN PIKES: Horseshoe  
DUNDRELLS, LOVE BROTHERS: Cabana  
BUZZ UPSHAW: Pine Tree  
BIG DADDY KINSEY: Clinton's  
PAUL JAMES: Albert's Hall  
ROBBIE ROX: Isabella  
CHRIS WHITELEY: Grossman's  
THE THROBS

### SUNDAY 7

3 FACES OF PROTEST: Isabella  
FILM Music Lovers: Rivoli  
BLUES JAM with STEVEN C.  
& THE RED ROCKETS (2-6 pm)  
TALENT SHOWCASE (7-11 pm): Lee's  
LARRY GOODHAND Blues Band: Grossman's  
SUFFER MACHINE: Key West

### MONDAY 8

TRUDY ARTMAN: Grossman's til Wed  
JAMES AMBROSE: Horseshoe til Wed  
FRED'S BICYCLE REPAIR SHOP: Rivoli  
COMPANY TOWN: Isabella til Tues  
GUITAR MIKEY & THE REAL THING  
with KING BISCUIT BOY  
Albert's Hall  
MUHTABI: Bamboo  
CASUAL CASUAL: Cameron  
SILENT FILMS, MAN MADE FIBRES: Lee's  
BLOOD ON THE SADDLE: Key West (Ldn.)

### TUESDAY 9

SCREAMING LIZARD,  
ORCHESTRA PAALOVA,  
STRANGER THAN FICTION: Lee's  
JOHNNY MACLEOD: Cameron  
WOMEN'S PRESS READINGS: Rivoli  
Regg Heart: Cabana  
SHUFFLE DEMONS: Bamboo  
LIBERTY SILVER & more  
Leukemia Research BENEFIT: Diamond  
NEW MODEL ARMY: RPM  
THOSE DARNED BIPEDS: Key West (Ldn.)

### WEDNESDAY 10

TRES HOMBRES: R&R Heaven  
JEFFREY HATCHER,  
COMPANY TOWN: Lee's  
GARBAGEMEN: Cameron  
STILL LIFE,  
FISH IN THE ATTIC: Cabana  
JAMES AMBROSE: Horseshoe  
PRAIRIE OYSTER:  
Isabella til Thurs  
BANDA BRAVA: Bamboo  
DANNY MARKS: Brunswick House  
POETRY SWEAT SHOP: Rivoli  
TRUDY ARTMAN: Grossman's  
DESTINY: Nag's Head North til Thurs  
Sam The Record Man's  
Xmas Party: Copa

### THURSDAY 11

PICTURE COMES TO LIFE: Horseshoe  
SCOTT MERRITT: Rivoli  
MAD ABOUT PLAID: Lee's  
BLUE BLAZERS: Isabella (Lower)  
TABULA RASA: Elmo  
SATTALITES: Bamboo til Sat  
MAGIC BEANS: Cameron  
PHIL GUY: Clinton's  
THOUGHT ROCKETS, THE GUNNERS: Cabana  
KILLER DWARVES: R&R Heaven  
MANHATTANS: Copa  
TOO RUDE: Grossman's til Sat  
MIKE ADKINSON: Key West (Ldn.)

### FRIDAY 12

KIDS IN THE HALL: Rivoli til Sat  
JEFFREY HATCHER: Isabella (Cameo)  
THE LAWN, KENSINGTONS: Cabana  
GUNNERS: Isabella (Lower)

**Please call in your What's Shakin'  
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JACK DEKEYSER: Horseshoe  
HOPPING PENGUINS: Lee's  
MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE: R&R Heaven  
FM, NASH THE SLASH: N. Head North  
JA CONNECTION: Cameron  
OCTOBER CRISIS: Key West (Ldn.)

**SATURDAY 13**

KIDS IN THE HALL: Rivoli  
SATTALITES: Bamboo  
RUMBLE SEAT: Elmocambo  
PHANTOMS: Isabella  
TOO RUDE: Grossman's  
QUEEN IDA: Horseshoe  
SUPREME BAGG TEAM: Cabana  
STARK NAKED: Lee's  
FM: R&R Heaven  
PHIL GUY: Clinton's  
NOSMO KING JR.: Isabella (Lower)  
GUITAR MIKEY & THE REAL THING:  
Albert's Hall  
PARTS FOUND IN SEA: Cameron  
SADDLE TRAMPS: Key West (Ldn.)

**SUNDAY 14**

BLUES JAM: Lee's  
THE HOCK: Grossman's  
JASON AND THE SCORCHERS,  
THE GEORGIA SATELLITES: Diamond  
FILM: 'Savage Messiah': Rivoli  
SHOCK CULTURE: Key West (Ldn.)

**MONDAY 15**

ITSA SKITSA: Bamboo  
JEFFERY HATCHER: Horseshoe til Tues  
JEFF HEALEY: Albert's Hall til Sat  
ZOOTZ DANCE BAND: Isabella  
MIKE MACDONALD: Grossman's til Sat  
FRED'S BICYCLE REPAIR SHOP: Rivoli  
PROF. PIANO: Clinton's til Sat  
ACEBOY, ZEBRA PEOPLE: Lee's  
THE FINKS: Key West

**TUESDAY 16**

STEVEN C. & THE RED ROCKETS  
DELTA DEVILS: Lee's  
BIG PARADE: Isabella (Cameo)  
JOHNNY MACLEOD: Cameron  
DAVID WILCOX: Diamond  
Regg Hart: Cabana  
COMMUNARDS: Copa  
GRANNY'S GUNS: Key West

**WEDNESDAY 17**

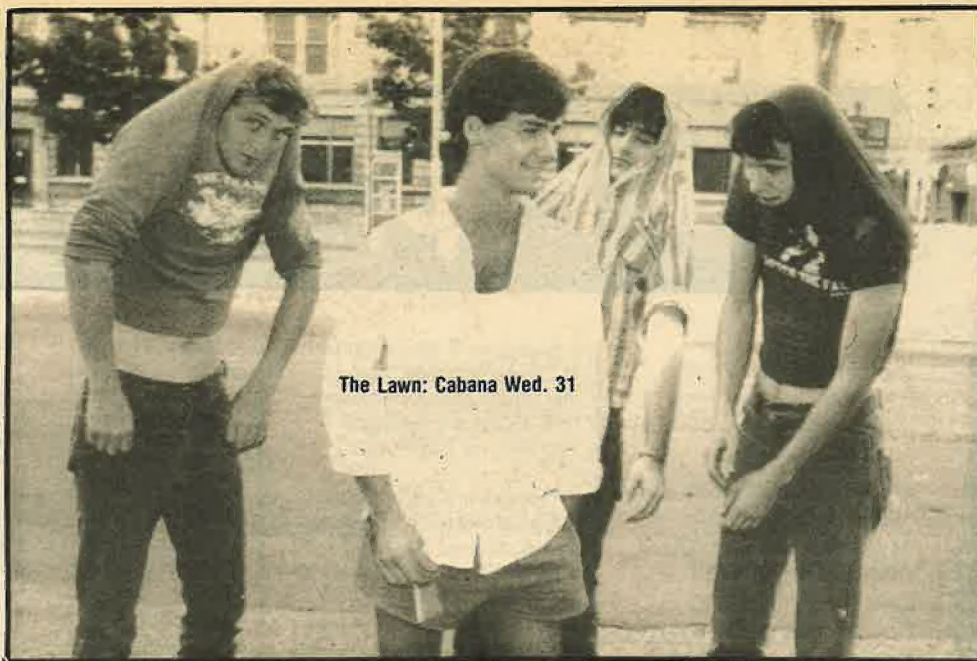
HUNTING PARTY, CENTURY'S END  
SOUTH OF FRANCE: Lee's  
VEHICLE: Nag's Head North  
JACK DEKEYSER BAND: Isabella til Sat  
CIRCA BAND, THE NOW FEELING: Cabana  
GARBAGEMEN: Cameron  
BLACK COMMUNITY BENEFIT: Bamboo  
SONGSHIP REUNION: Horseshoe til Fri  
EDNA & EDNA: Key West (Ldn.)

**THURSDAY 18**

GARLAND JEFFREY'S, HANDSOME NED  
EUGENE RIPPER: Bamboo  
JOHNNIE TRASH: Isabella (Lower)  
BLENDERS, BIG RED ROOSTERS: Cabana  
BRIGHTON ROCKS: Diamond  
BAKKA PO: Cameron  
PICTURES COME TO LIFE: EIMO  
MICAH BARNES: Lee's  
TERRY CADE: Rivoli  
THE PRIZE: Nag's Head North  
PAUL JAMES: Rock & Roll Heaven  
NORTHERN PIKES  
SUBARCTIC SLIME DEERS: Copa  
BLOOD ON THE SADDLE  
BLUE RODEO, COWBOY JUNKIES: RPM  
WHITELY BROS. BLUES BAND:  
PineTree til Sat  
KITTEN WITH A WHIP: Key West

**FRIDAY 19**

PHASE II: Bamboo til Sat  
COWBOY JUNKIES: Rivoli  
DESIGN: Isabella til Sat  
THE JITTERS: Lee's



The Lawn: Cabana Wed. 31

—Lynn Farrell

GAYAP: Cameron  
ROBBIE ROX: Elmo  
GREEN RIVER: Nag's Head North  
IKONS, BRASS SOLDIER: Cabana  
UKASE: Key West

**SATURDAY 20**

MIKE MACDONALD: Grossman's  
GROOVY RELIGION,  
NEON ROME, CHANGE OF HEART: Lee's  
WHITELY BROS. BLUES BAND: PineTree  
VITAL SINES, RHEOSTATICS: Rivoli  
RANG TANG: Cabana  
GREEN RIVER: Nag's Head North  
THE THRASHERS: Cameron  
ZARBO: Elmo  
J.D. BAND: Isabella (Cameo)  
DANNY MARKS: Horseshoe  
JEFF HEALEY: Albert's Hall  
SAM F. HAINES: Key West

**SUNDAY 21**

SNEAKERS: Grossman's  
BLUES JAM: Lee's  
FILM 'The Devils': Rivoli

**MONDAY 22**

THE PARTLAND BROTHERS: Diamond  
THE NEW NEDS: Cameron  
PRAIRIE OYSTER: Clinton's til Wed  
PHANTOMS: Albert's Hall til Tues  
NEO CHAPMAN: Grossman's  
JUDY BROWN BAND: Horseshoe til Tues  
TULA: Bamboo  
A FISH INC., 11:59,  
PHANTOM BUFFALOES: Lee's  
MIKE MACDONALD: Isabella til Tues  
BOYS FROM NOWHERE, LEGEND KILLERS  
UNGONE: Key West (Ldn.)

**TUESDAY 23**

JOHNNY MACLEOD: Cameron  
RADICAL PRINCIPLES: Bamboo  
THE LAWN, RHEOSTATICS,  
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF DAVE: Cabana  
BLUES BANDITS: Key West

**WEDNESDAY 24**

NEO CHAPMAN: Grossman's  
63 MONROE, DIOXINE,  
SAM F. HAINES JAM: Key West

**THURSDAY 25**

BANANARAMA & ALIEN SEX FIEND:  
Wheat Sheaf Tavern, Sudbury

**FRIDAY 26**

ODYSSEY: Bamboo til Sat  
PHANTOMS: Albert's Hall til Sat

JOANNE MACKELL: Horseshoe  
CEE DEES: PineTree til Sat  
J.D. BAND: Isabella  
PRAIRIE OYSTER: Clinton's til Sat  
RON HEDLAND: Grossman's til Sat  
THE NOW FEELING: Isabella (Lower)  
CRAWLING KING SNAKES: Key West

**SATURDAY 27**

ODYSSEY: Bamboo  
FADED FILMS: Key West  
KEN HANNAN BAND: Cabana  
MORGAN DAVIS: Horseshoe  
CEE DEES: Pine Tree  
LARRY GOODHAND: Isabella (Lower)  
PHANTOMS: Albert's Hall

**SUNDAY 28**

BLUES JAM: Clinton's  
NATIONAL STEEL: Grossman's

**MONDAY 29**

GEORGE ST. KITTS: Bamboo  
THE BENDERS: Isabella (Cameo)  
PAUL JAMES: Albert's Hall  
PRIDE, I.N.B.: Lee's  
IKONS: Cameron

**TUESDAY 30**

SUBVERSION: Key West  
Regg Hart: Cabana  
JA CONNECTION: Isabella (Cameo)  
STREET BEAT: Bamboo  
THE RED: Lee's

**NEW YEAR'S EVE  
WEDNESDAY 31**

THE LAWN, ONE OF ONE: Cabana  
SHADOWY MEN, COWBOY JUNKIES: Rivoli  
SHUFFLE DEMONS: Lee's  
JACK DEKEYSER: Isabella  
ABSOLUTE WHORES: Isabella  
SATTALITES: Bamboo  
BLUE RODEO: Horseshoe  
FORGOTTEN REBELS: EIMO  
PAUL JAMES: Albert's Hall  
REVEREND KEN &  
THE LOST FOLLOWERS: Brunswick  
JAMES DOOLIN & THE JAGUARS  
RANG TANGO: Pine Tree  
THE NEW NEDS: Cameron  
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SUFFER MACHINE: Key West  
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LEE'S PALACE—529 BLOOR W 532-7383  
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PADDOCK—178 BATHURST 364-2536  
PINETREE—650 QUEEN W 364-5258  
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**STAFF****EDITOR/PUBLISHERS**

Nancy Lanthier  
Dave MacIntosh

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**

Denis Seguin

**LAYOUT/DESIGN**

Dave MacIntosh

**PHOTO EDITOR**

Chris Buck

**WRITERS**

Phillip Dellio  
Rick McGinnis  
Dave Bidini  
Tim Powis  
Helen Lee  
B.F. Mowat  
King Rick Rock  
Phillip Bull  
Philip Martin  
Rob Hough  
Scott Hyrtle  
Denis Seguin  
Dave Rave

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Chris Buck  
Steve Ralph  
Rick McGinnis  
Mike Dyer  
Heather Blurton  
Peter Beck  
Lynn Farrell  
Mark Malnguy  
William

**REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR**

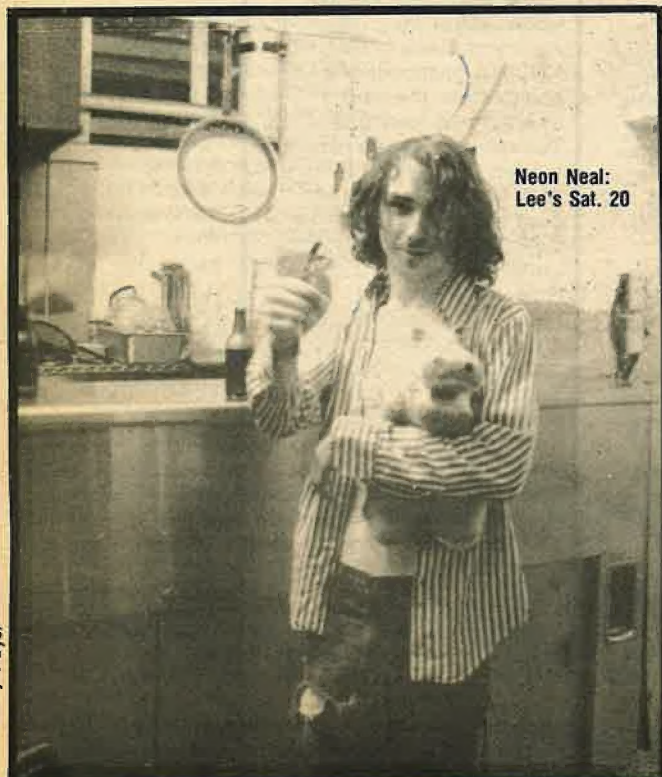
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Neon Neal:  
Lee's Sat. 20

—Myke Dyer



Scott B: Lee's Fri. 5

—Chris Buck





# New Pop; "Old Rules"

Back in the days when Winkle wore muckluks, local bands would sit around on weeknights at the Bev and talk about how someday a businessman with sweaty palms and gold rings would corral them backstage and hand out contracts. We'd drink drink cheap beer and listen to Winkle whispering over the table about the phone-calls he was getting in the middle of the night from 14-year-old girls who had seen his picture in the paper. We all assumed that this idolatry would lead to hit singles and recording deals; I was once recognized in Sherway Mall, which led me to believe that packing Maple Leaf Gardens wasn't too far off from jamming in smokey bars, getting an encore and bringing home U of T students after the show.

In the days when I was in highschool and hanging out with guys like Winkle, I used to mock my friends who were planning careers. The promise of pop stardom was revealed as an illusion of realistic proportions and I figured that if you prayed hard enough before you went to bed, then practised like hell the next day, these dreams could be found before you turned the drinking age.

But now that the late, great Toronto pop scene of 1980-83 has aged into young adulthood, the lustre of pop's grand estate looks more like rust-proof siding on a 75 Chevy. Vital Sines and L'Etranger are about the only "seminal post-punk" bands to survive the cruelty of fate. In the Sines' case, they continue without guitarist Gordie Wilson, in his place is Kurt Swinghammer (who didn't know where Toronto was five years ago), and with new synth player James Grey. L'Etranger on the other hand, have been renamed The Andrew Cash Band, no longer including seminal members Chuck Angus and keyboard player Bruce PM.

Both groups are still young, yet both have seen a lot of shit go down. With brand new albums out (the Sines' second and Cash's third), each group has come a lot closer to the deciphering the mechanics of the industry, yet a lot farther away from those dreams of burgeoning young punks. In any case,

it seems as if we're sitting at the same table, thinking the same things. Is there a turn in the road ahead? Answer me boys.

"I wear a skirt because it's comfortable. Sometimes I walk around the house in a skirt. Those boots used to be hell to dance in." Rick Winkle, who used to run a studio in his home while his mom made coffee for the visiting bands, is talking about a black cotton skirt he now dons on stage instead of muckluks. Winkle and his partner for a hundred years, Terry Michealson, are sitting in a plush livingroom in Rosedale, hawking the latest Sines album *Big Dark Dreams*. The last time we did this serious interview shit, we were downstairs in a bungalow in Little Greece, listening to bands called Flyte and Swedish Fish, who Winkle produced in his basement hovel.

"Those days were great," he says, "but I don't miss riding on my motorbike to London or wherever, to deliver our records. Now we've got other people doing that stuff for us. It was a drag to sell the studio, but we're movin' up. You can't keep doing the same thing every year. There comes a time when you know you've just gotta get your shit together."

The Sines suffered the pangs of self-realization when they finally woke-up to the fact that Canadian record companies would never ever sign a band like theirs. The companies continually harped on the fact that their sound was "too dark," then they release *Skinny Puppy* for national distribution. Winkle still defines the industry as being years behind what's really going on, yet at the same time you can't help but think that not being signed gets under his skin.

In that low period, the band also lost guitarist Gordie Wilson, who was miffed at the fact neither Winkle nor Michaelson was warm to changes in musical style.

"But I think we've matured," says Michealson. "We no longer dismiss new ideas when they're brought up. Gordie wanted us to play country, but we couldn't believe he was serious."

Gordie gets pissed off whenever he reads interviews with Vital Sines, because he thinks they imply he's given up music for a real job, and the fact that "he's looking really healthy" makes him seem, he feels, "like I used to be dead or something." But both Winkle and Michaelson feel there's no difficulty over Wilson's departure; it's true the sound of the band has changed—it's more rockin' than before—but more importantly, Kurt Swinghammer's presence, with his

sophisticated guitar doodling and stagerock wardrobe, has converted the Sines from a second-rate dark funk band into a swingin' rockshow.

"Yeah, the idea of a rock show, or stadium show, or whatever, is particularly suited to the Sines," says Winkle. "Not enough bands worry about that. You've gotta give the people their money's worth. We're concentratng more on lights and stage props and things that make the band look like a professional act, like we're serious about what we're doing. When we opened for Love and Rockets, we put on a show. It's exciting. Fuck, it's fun..."

Currently, Vital Sines are superceding the industry with a solid independent album in the stores; how far this will actually get them is another question. It's weird thinking of Winkle standing at a booth in Mississauga signing autographs for kids on United Way's fund raising movie day ("We were the warm-up autograph act for Images in Vogue," says Rick), but these things must be done if this grown-up band wants to sell bits of vinyl to pimply suburban girls. Whether their street fans want to accept it or not, the Sines must compete with Lionel Richie, Glass Tiger and other arch-enemies if they're to grapple their piece of the pie. It's not all 35 cent draft and gigs at the Rivoli anymore. It's time to get in there, raise some hell and get those 11 inch glossies on the bedroom walls of teenagers everywhere.

"The old rules gotta change. Same bands play the same benefits and it's been that way from the beginning. There's never really been any new bands to come around and take over, and I sense there's something wrong. It's stagnating, and it's boring. You can't be afraid to offend people."

Before Andy Cash said that, he said a thousand things about hockey; we talked about the Americanization of the NHL, the changing styles of goaltenders, the long-awaited resurgence of Toronto as a league contender. Andy went as far as to suggest that the success of the Leafs might be directly proportional to the number of North Americans who buy records put out by Toronto bands. We concluded that our hockey is as good a metaphor for the emergent Canadian identity as anything. Then we laced up our skates, cracked open some ales, and dug into the problems of being Canadian, proud like hosers and angry like patriots.

"I worry about (Vancouver independent label)

Nettwerk being distributed by Capitol records. I've no respect for Capitol records at all. Dean Cameron's great (A&R man for Capitol) and he's very sincere, but he's a businessman, he doesn't take any chances. The only way things will change is if the bands forego the industry or leave the country to make records. We are getting fed by America and not until Canadians start respecting their own culture will bands start making it here. Most Canadians don't have a true sense of what Canada is; we need to articulate our culture, or at least define it in clearer terms. Our industry is subservient already. Why should our music be subservient?"

Like Vital Sines, Andy Cash must compete. In order for Toronto groups to grow in popularity, musicians have to be prepared to duke it out and take the industry to the mat. Cash suggests that "bands should forget about the industry, put it out of their heads," and he implies that in the early days of L'Etranger, he was spiritually motivated to play music, rather than lured by a record deal.

"I see so much shit out there that is destructive that I want to throw my two cents in. I read an interview with Gerry Young (Current Records) the other day who said that you couldn't make a good record in Canada for under 100,000 dollars. Well, what's a good record? You don't have to invest 500,000 dollars in Glass Tiger—we'll do, because they're shit—but it shouldn't take that much."

L'Etranger have always been the fighting white hope of the local pop scene, albeit on a small scale, and from what Andy tells me, I doubt that this will stop. Just as one stage of Toronto music has left basic training and entered the scary real world of rock and roll, so has Andy stepped from one phase of his life into another. During our conversation, he rebuked the idea of supporting political causes just because they're political; in the past, he defiantly endorsed left-wing organizations, but now, he wonders if he hasn't been merely "paying for an expensive office space on Bay Street." Like Winkle, he has realized that pop music isn't all spirit and beer, Cash also has been struck by rock's cold reality.

"Our next album will be totally stripped down, and more personal. There's nobody really dangerous in Canadian music. Rock stars win the Order of Canada alongside Norman Jewison. I don't want to preach, but I think we'll still continue to make statements. We haven't given up."

Dave Bidini

Andy Cash — Mark Malnguy



Terry, Rick, Kurt, Glenn — Mark Malnguy





# DIAMOND

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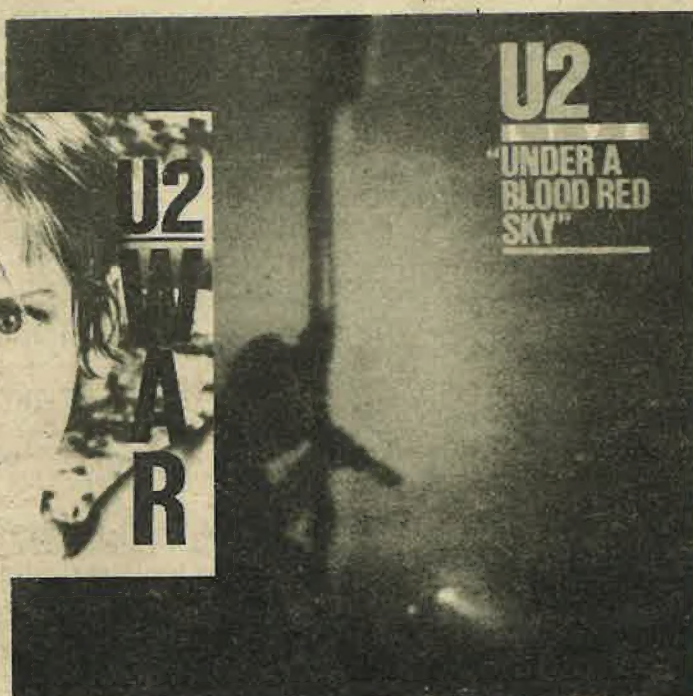




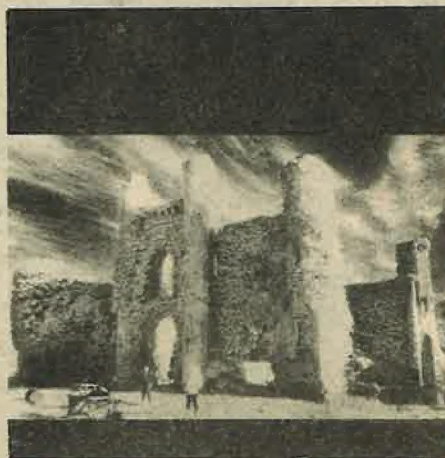
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